

# THE MERCERSBURG REVIEW.

APRIL, 1875.

---

## ART. I.—PRINCETON AND ANDOVER ON CALVINISM.\*

---

It is a curious fact that two articles have appeared simultaneously in the Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review and the Bibliotheca Sacra and Theological Eclectic, at the opening of the present year, the one in support of the theory of the divine decrees commonly known as Calvinism, the other against that theory. This fact is curious, even though the article from Andover, which is a translation, may not be intended at all to express the position of that theological centre on the subject under consideration. It appears in the Review without note or comment. It would hardly have been published in the Princeton Review under any circumstances. It is curious also that the article from Andover should come from *Rothe*. The great German theologians and philosophers of the more recent times have hitherto been tabooed by Puritan and Presbyterian teachers; they are still, no doubt, considered by Princeton as entirely out of the circle of orthodoxy, and entirely unreliable and positively dangerous. *Rothe* was a great thinker

---

\*Calvinism in Doctrine and Life. By Lyman H. Atwater. Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review. January, 1875.

*Rothe* on The Limitations of Divine Foreknowledge. By J. P. Lacroix, of the Wesleyan University, Ohio. Bibliotheca Sacra, and Theological Eclectic. January, 1875.

and a good man, and his worth in both respects has been amply testified to in two excellent articles by Dr. Samuel Osgood of New York, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of last year. Years ago, when Mercersburg called attention to the masterly writings of such men as Schleiermacher and Rothe, it was considered a reproach by New England to have anything to do with them, and suspicion was spread far and wide against the orthodoxy of the Reformed Church because the professors studied them. All this is changed now.

The article by Dr. Atwater is, no doubt, intended as a break-water against the tide that is setting so powerfully in opposition to Calvinism, "not only by skeptics and rationalists, but by some evangelicals who so misconceive and misrepresent to themselves and others its" (Calvinism's) "peculiarities, as to give them a hideous aspect, &c." "Whoever avows this predestination," he says, "will earn for himself the title of Calvinist, and not unlikely, at the hands of some redoubtable polemic, the credit of making God an 'infinite gorilla.' An eloquent preacher, whose prayers lifted us to the third heaven as no other man's ever have, once told us, that whenever a minister preached election, he was sure to hear within a week that he had been preaching that 'hell was peopled with infants.' No question, it is a part of the strategy of most anti-Calvinistic writers now, to load Calvinism with the doctrine of infant perdition, which it discards,\* and which has no more necessary affinity for it than for other systems. But what we specially note is that predestination is recognized as a differential element of Calvinism by friend and foe, and is usually believed by

---

\*May there not be a reference here to Dr. Krauth's article, in which he showed so conclusively that Calvinistic writers in the past did teach the doctrine that non-elect infants, dying in infancy, are damned? Dr. Hodge had published the remark, with special reference to something Dr. Krauth had said on this subject, that he (Dr. H.) was not acquainted with a single Calvinistic author who taught this view. Dr. Krauth showed conclusively in his article (which afterwards grew into a small volume) that the Calvinistic writers so generally teach it, that it is difficult to find one who does not. Since then Dr. Hodge has made no attempt at a public reply, nor has he publicly recalled or corrected his assertion. It may, indeed, be said that Dr. Hodge has no interest in this merely historical fact. But it is important; because, if the great Calvinistic writers have held and taught it in the past, it is a question whether Dr. Hodge can claim to be a consistent Calvinist if he denies it. Dr. Atwater here sets it aside as a reproach. It would be more satisfactory if he were to show how the salvation of all infants who die in infancy can be reconciled with his doctrine of the divine decrees.

each to carry with it whatever else he understands, or misunderstands, to belong to the system."

We propose to notice some of the arguments contained in this article of Dr. Atwater's, and also some of the counter-arguments contained in the article from Andover.

Dr. Atwater sets out by stating the doctrine of predestination by quoting from the Westminster Confession, "God from all eternity, did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." After a few quotations of this kind, he proceeds: "The objections and charges so vehemently urged against this doctrine, that it subverts or impairs the moral freedom and accountability of men, therefore, are utterly groundless." He then goes on to furnish what he regards as proof. We give the opening paragraph of his argument, and follow it by one on the other side, from the article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

"The decree of God is effective if it ensure the simple *certainty* of the event in accordance with the true nature, and by the proper efficiency of its immediate cause; and so freely, if it be free cause. Such certainty of action in no manner impairs freedom in the manner of it. This is susceptible of easy demonstration. Is it not certain that the most perfect free agents, God, holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven, will never swerve from perfect holiness, and this without detriment to their freedom? And is not this certainty, that God will only do what is right and best, as absolute as both his goodness and freedom? Moreover, it is indisputable, may we not say self-evident, that the nature of any event, or the action of any cause, whether free or necessary, is not changed by the antecedent certainty that it will occur, and none the less so if this certainty reach back to the eternal cognitions and counsels of the infinite mind."

There are two points here. First, the certainty of actions in the case of God and those who have obtained a fixed, positive moral character. Then, that the action is not disturbed by a knowledge on the part of God that it will certainly take place. The whole

argument here hinges on the foreknowledge of God. Let us see what *Rothe*, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, says on this point:

"A difficulty presents itself, however, so soon as we apply the idea of the divine world-government to the actions of personal world-creatures (*i. e.* within the sphere of our earthly-world, to human beings)—in view of the fact that the actions of personal beings, in the very nature of the case, proceed from personal self-determination. For as the divine world-government presupposes a world-plan, and as such a plan implies a divine predetermination of the world's development, it would seem, at first view, that thereby the personal free self-determination of personal world-creatures were inevitably precluded. Such a predetermination, in the sense usually implied, manifestly precludes the possibility of effectual personal will-determinations in such creatures; and the impossibility of such will-determinations involves the psychological impossibility of personal will-determinations on the whole, at least, for all such as know of such divine predetermination. For, indeed, who would, with a clear consciousness, be willing to make efforts which he knows to be utterly superfluous and ineffectual? Now, the traditional but obsolete make-shift at this point is this: that God's eternal foreseeing of the future free actions of personal creatures is called in to the rescue. God is represented as basing His own eternal world-plan upon His certain eternal foreknowledge\* of all the future workings and activities of His (yet to be created) creatures, and more especially of the future free actions of such of them as are personal. By this course, however, the knot is not disentangled, but only rendered the more perplexing. For it not only does not enable us to safeguard creatural freedom, but it forces us, at the same time, to sacrifice also the freedom of God Himself, reducing Him to a dependence on His personal creatures, utterly inconsistent with His absoluteism. In the case of a being such as the personal creature, and especially in the case of man, before having attained to his moral perfection, the divine foreknowledge

\* "The expression 'foreknowledge of God,' is not at all a happy one, as it is very liable to misapprehension and misapplication. There is a foreknowledge of God in no other sense than in that of forethinking (*a priori* thinking), and relatively, of a foredetermining."



of his actions necessarily\* precludes His freedom, so soon as we take this term in its full sense (that is, as the capability of choosing between contradictory forms of self-determination). For in such personal creatures freedom has not as yet become absolutely identical with (moral) necessity (which it of course can become, and which it in fact is, in its true perfection, or as true freedom); in other words, its character has not ripened to its definitive perfection, and consequently there must inevitably as yet cling to its freedom some degree of capriciousness. Any pretended free-will act of such a creature, which can be foreseen with unconditional (and it is such alone that we here mean) certainty—even though the foreseeing one be God Himself—becomes, by this very condition, an unfree, necessary one. So long as my freedom is not as yet ripened beyond all caprice or subjective discretion, I am really free only when I can say, 'I could, just as I am, and as precisely this same person, have chosen and acted, in this particular case, also otherwise than as I have done, though of course not with the same ease, or as the case may be, difficulty.' If God infallibly foreknows with apodictic certainty, all the actions of men, then these actions must be absolutely certain beforehand; but (seeing that, as being partially discretionary, they cannot rest absolutely on inner necessity) they could be absolutely certain beforehand only through a divine predetermination; but this would not only preclude the free self-determination of man, but also make God the author of sin. That which in God's knowledge stands objectively fixed, cannot be for man, in his present unperfected state, a matter of free determination; the absolute foreknowledge on the part of God of the actions of as yet not perfected creatures is unavoidably a predetermining of the same.† It is in vain to seek to evade this consequence by resorting to the formula, that God

---

\* "Weisse (Philos. Dogmat, i. p. 609) says: 'The affirmation of an unconditional foreknowledge of everything yet to come, notwithstanding that it is made with as much assurance as by Augustine himself (qui non est praescius omnium futurorum, non est utique Deus.—Civ. Dei. v. p. 9), is, say what one will, nothing else than positive and glaring determinism,—a determinism which precludes the freedom of God, when the affirmation is applied to the future acts of God, and which annuls creatural freedom, when applied to all the acts of creatures.'"

† "Martensen (Dogmat., p. 413): 'Whatever can be an object of an eternal foreknowledge, must be based in a law of eternal necessity.'"

foreknows the free actions of creatures expressly as free.\* This formula contains a self-contradictory assertion; for the free, in so far as it is as yet discretionarily (capriciously) free, can, as such, not possibly be foreknown in an absolute and infallible manner. It cannot at all be an object of a proper, that is, an unconditionally reliable foreknowledge, and consequently also not of the divine foreknowledge. Of course we do not mean that the free does not admit of any precalculation whatever. On the contrary, any intelligent judge can conjecture beforehand, of any given moral subject, the manner in which he will act under given circumstances, and that, too, with all the greater certainty, the more accurately, on the one hand, he knows both the subject and his environment, and the more fully, on the other, the said subject has already approached the completion of his character-development. But so long as the subject has not attained to perfect completion, that is, to a perfectly ripened moral character, this calculation can never lead to anything but probabilities, greater or less; but not to an infallibly correct result, and consequently not to one that is apodictically certain. And of this latter alone we are here speaking. Such an approximate precalculation of the free actions of personal creatures lies, of course, in the capacity of God, and indeed to the highest degree, so that for Him all possibility of deception as to the degree of the probability of such precalculation is precluded. And He undoubtedly puts this capacity into full application, both in the forming of His world-plan and in His world-governing; this, however, does not amount to a properly so-called, that is, to an apodictic foreknowledge.

"To the question, how indeed such a foreknowledge as to the future actions of creatures could be possible to God, no other answer has been found than a resort to the statement that the divine foreknowledge of the future is not of a calculating character, as with man, but is intuitive, and that it can be such for the reason that it is of an eternal, trans-temporal character. This answer, however, is entirely unsatisfactory; for the divine

---

\* "Müller (Sünde, 3. Auf., p. 289) says: 'If, in using this formula, the idea of freedom is taken in real earnest,.....then it does not solve the problem, but simply proposes it. For the real question is, in fact, this: Whether God can infallibly foresee the future actions of free creatures, or eternally foreknow them, without by that very circumstance making them necessary?'

foreknowledge is of an intuitive beholding character only as being speculative. To say that it is not a calculated foreknowledge can only mean that the thinking whereby it is reached is not limited by a lapse of time. The difficulty remains, therefore, wholly unremoved; for, unquestionably, thought can foreknow with absolute certainty only the absolutely necessary. And it is equally inconclusive to say, that because the knowledge of God is eternal and trans-temporal, therefore an intuitive knowledge of the future is possible. For, if a trans-temporal knowledge is conceivable at all, it is so only as a knowing through pure, or speculative thinking. But if intuitive thinking is taken in such a sense as not to be a knowing through pure thinking, then any trans-temporal beholding or knowing is, to us, at least, a meaningless word.

"We must, therefore, regard it as settled, that the as yet future actions of unperfected personal creatures cannot, in the very nature of the case, be the object of any infallible foreknowledge whatever. And for this reason it does not in the least detract from the absoluteness of God not to predicate of Him an absolutely certain foreknowledge of such actions.\*

"Knowledge differs, necessarily, according to the degree of the difference of its objects. God knows, in virtue of His omniscience, only that which is *per se* a possible object of knowledge; just as, also, by virtue of His omnipotence He cannot do everything, but only that which in the nature of things is possible. Even as it is *per se* impossible to cause that that which has been shall not have been, etc., so is it *per se* impossible to know that which in the nature of the case cannot be known. This non-knowledge or non-ability is in no sense a defect or imperfection on the part of God, seeing that the pretended objects thereof do not belong to the possible objects of the divine omniscience and omnipotence. Such a foreknowledge as we here deny, would, in fact, on the contrary, introduce an untruthfulness into the knowledge of God. For

---

\* "Im. H. Fichte (Spekul. Theol. p. 644): 'So certainly as a change in the world really takes place, it must be valid also for God, and for His consciousness, in so far as He is the highest intelligence; that is, He must know the past as past, and the future as to come.'—Vatke (Menschl. Freiheit, p. 479): 'Did not the antithesis of past and future exist for God, He would not be capable of knowing temporal things correctly; that is, He would not be omniscient.'

truth is the agreement of a conception with its object. Whoever, therefore, conceives the as yet necessarily undetermined and not absolutely about-to-be, as definitely and absolutely about to be, his conception has no objective truth. In fact, the denial of the freedom of God is an unavoidable consequence of the hitherto prevailing attempt to solve the difficulty here in question by a resort to the doctrine of the divine omniscience. For, if God fore-knows absolutely, definitely, from all eternity, absolutely everything, then this involves the necessary assumption that from all eternity absolutely everything stands fast in an absolutely objective manner, and is consequently absolutely necessary. And, notwithstanding that it may be said that it is through God himself that absolutely everything stands thus from all eternity absolutely fast, still this does not safeguard the freedom of God; it simply declares that God Himself has from all eternity subjected Himself to an unchangeable necessity—that He has Himself enthroned a *fatum* above Himself, and consequently has divested Himself of that which is an essential attribute of His own nature. The fact is, free natural actions can be known in no other manner than as simply possible.

“And it is as clear as the light of the day that the attempt to reconcile the eternal world-plan of God and the will-freedom of personal creatures by appealing to God’s eternal, absolute fore-knowledge of the free actions of such creatures, inevitably (however unintentionally) destroys the absolute independence of God. If we conceive of the freedom of personal creatures as really the capability of choosing among contraries, and if we conceive of God as determined in his forming of His world-plan by His fore-knowledge of the manner in which they will choose, then we make the thinking and willing of God in laying this world-plan dependent on the (by nothing determined) discretionary choice of free creatures. According as we conceive of the choice of even a single free creature as in any single case deciding in this or in some other way, such choosing will condition an entirely different series of consequences, and hence occasion an entirely different course of world-history; and inasmuch as we, according as the world-course is different, must also conceive differently of the plan of the divine world-government (which cannot differ from the

world-course), hence we manifestly make the plan of the world-government to be modified, thus or so, from eternity, by the free actions of creatures. This position is, in fact, taken in express words by the notorious formula whereby the attempt is made to safeguard the freedom of moral creatures by a resort to the divine *πρόγνωσις* and *πρόθεσις*: 'It is not because God has foreseen it that thou hast done this or that; but because God foresaw that thy free choice would decide for it, He has taken this thy action into His eternal counsel, and made it a part of His world-plan.' Now, this assumption really involves a total reversal of the relation of dependence between God and the creature.

"Thus the attempt at safeguarding the absoluteness of God against a merely imaginary danger actually results in sacrificing it altogether. And, in general, this attempt is based on a view of the relation of God to the world which would imply that God had reserved to himself, during the entire course of world-history, only the tedious rôle of an idle spectator.\*

"The only possible reconciliation of the contradiction between the assumption of a predetermined divine world-plan and the presupposition of the freedom of the actions of personal creatures, affords, as we shall see, a perfect safeguard to the character of God. Now the actual removal of this contradiction can, of course, be effected only by relaxing somewhat from the strictness of the usual conception, either of creatural freedom, or of the divine foreknowledge. From creatural freedom, however, nothing can be

---

\* "Martensen (Dogmat., p. 193), remarks that the view which excludes the conditional from the divine counsels, evinces itself thereby, 'as unhistorical, in that it makes of history a merely passive reflex of the divine will.' On p. 248 the same author writes: 'As an unconditional foreknowledge annuls the conception of the freely-acting creature, so also it destroys the conception of God as freely-acting in history. The God who foreknows everything becomes thereby a mere spectator of the already eternally-settled and predetermined events of history, and is not the all-tempering ruler in a drama of freedom which he carries out in co-operation (or in conflict) with the freedom of his creation. Hence, unless we wish to preclude the free mutual relation between God and the creation, we cannot regard the entire actual world-course as the contents of the divine foreknowledge, but only the eternal contents of the world-course, or the eternal truth developed therein.' On p. 224, he says: 'The antagonism which some have found between a free world-course whose ways are not God's ways and the absolute dependence of creation upon the divine omnipotence, rests upon an ignoring of the truth that omnipotence is essentially an ethical, and hence a self-limiting power.'"

given up without sacrificing it entirely; whereas, from the very nature of the case, and in the very interest of the idea of God itself, we are imperatively driven to make such a limitation of the foreknowledge of God as we have above indicated.

"Moreover, the position we have here taken as to the divine world-plan and the divine world-government, is imperiously and directly called for by the very religious interest itself. For by the entertainment of any other view, the act of prayer becomes not only absurd but also a piece of thoughtlessness, which would be, religiously, entirely inexcusable. The pious consciousness in its direct and absolute certainty of the real effectualness of true and properly so-called prayer, will and must, despite any and all seemingly consequent theology, unhesitatingly reject as false any and every conception of the divine world-government which admits of no scope for prayer—that is, which precludes the possibility of a really determining influence on our part upon the will of God and upon his guidance of the world."

We have given Rothe's argument at length on this one point of the divine foreknowledge. Whether it is fully correct in itself or not, and whether it can be reconciled with facts and the teaching of Scripture or not, it fully answers the argument of Dr. Atwater, for his theory of the divine decrees, drawn from reason, that is, what he calls the *a priori* argument. It appears that both agree in rejecting that theory of the divine foreknowledge which makes it dependent on the actions of the creature. Dr. Atwater argues as strongly as Rothe that "divine foreordination underlies divine foreknowledge." We may add here that Rothe by no means denied the doctrine of predestination, but explained it as referring to God's world-plan. "This world-plan settles immutably the world-goal, as well as also the organic series of logically necessary stages and development crises through which the world can be brought to this goal."

In what he calls the *a posteriori* argument, Dr. Atwater brings forward several exemplary and crucial scriptural cases.

The first one is the selling of Joseph into Egyptian bondage by his brethren. This act was inspired by the foulest motives of fratricidal envy and hate, on account of Joseph's superior goodness and prospects of deserved preëminence over them. They acted



with full freedom, there was no compulsion exercised over them, and yet the solution of the matter refers it all to God. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive." "This sin" (of selling Joseph into Egypt) "God abhorred, but yet suffered and purposed its occurrence, not for the sake of the sin, but for the sake of the immeasurable good to which he could overrule it." Of course, when Dr. Atwater says that God not only suffered, but purposed the occurrence, he begs the question. We do not think the historical case, nor the explanation given of it in the words of Joseph, necessarily teaches any such purpose on the part of God as rendered the actions of the brothers a necessity. Joseph unquestionably was to be a savior in the family of Jacob, and thus a type of Christ, and this implied wickedness on the part of the brothers and suffering on his part, but all this can be explained as well by allowing a divine governing power on the part of God running through the whole plot, by which he was able to bring good out of evil. This is something different from the idea that God purposed the very acts of wickedness by which the conclusion or solution was reached. Besides, there is nothing in this historical case which teaches or even intimates that God predestinates any one to eternal condemnation, which is the mainly offensive feature in the modern Calvinistic theory of the divine decrees.

The second example is the crucifixion of our Lord, "the pivot on which human history, and the administration of Providence and Grace alike turn. In forms most manifold, Christ signified to us that this great tragedy was to be carried through according to the counsel and purpose of God, and never more than in the outburst, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt.'" The whole course of Messianic prophecy points forward to it, and when it is accomplished, Peter explains it by saying, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Again, "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

But neither does this case make out the theory of divine deter-



minism in the sense of the Calvinistic theology. It is not difficult to see that God determined, when man fell, that His Son should be his redeemer from sin and death, and that in this character He would suffer the death of the cross. All this lay, by internal necessity, in the idea of a redeemer. The world, as sinful, would oppose and seek to destroy a sinless one who came to do them good. And God certainly directed and governed the whole unfolding of His plan of redemption, through the chosen people, down to the death of Christ upon the cross. Such a plan could even include with certainty such minutiae as the betrayal by one who had eaten bread with Christ, and the parting of His raiment by the soldiers, without, however, making the persons or the particular acts of those wicked men determined by a necessity external to themselves or the sinful world in which they stood. That, of course, is the only point in which Calvinism runs counter to the Christian consciousness—viz: Does God predestine any of his creatures to the commission of evil deeds, and through these to eternal condemnation? Even if we should allow (what we think cannot be shown) that the men who crucified Christ were predestinated to do it, yet all this would still not establish the doctrine of reprobation, for those very persons who were engaged in crucifying Christ had the offer of eternal salvation made to them. That is Peter's sermon. Ye, who by wicked hands have crucified and slain the Lord, are still invited to come and share in the salvation procured by His death.

After giving these two monumental examples, which the article in the *Princeton Review* regards as examples "of God's purpose and decree extending to, and making certain the coming to pass of acts of superlative guilt, which yet are inextricably interlinked with whatever is most fundamental in His kingdom of grace and glory," the writer proceeds to explain how "this doctrine logically includes the doctrine of election of the heirs of salvation, and of non-election, otherwise preterition, which is all that is meant by the somewhat sterner, though not unscriptural term, reprobation; election not to salvation without faith, holiness, and good works." The point here made is, that while God elects some to eternal life, He elects others to eternal death, but that he does this latter by passing them by, by non-election, or preterition, which is in itself the determina-

tion, and consists in God's withholding the saving and renewing operation of the Spirit from the sinner, as a judicial and penal visitation for his sins. And he fortifies this by referring to the assertions in Scripture that God often withdraws or withholds His Spirit, and other restraints on men, in punishment of their obduracy. That is undoubtedly true. But in all such cases the individual first hardens himself, and Scripture nowhere teaches that this original hardening of the heart is because God has necessitated it by withdrawing His Spirit and grace. On the other hand, St. Paul clearly declares in his epistle to the Romans that the heathen hardened themselves against God, that they would not retain the knowledge of God in their hearts, and *therefore* God gave them over to a reprobate mind. But this *preterition* theory just reverses this. It makes God's passing them by in the first instance, the cause of their inability to attain to salvation. And that in the face of many declarations of God to the contrary.

The writer seems to feel the force of this difficulty. He finds it necessary to grant "that God is perfectly sincere in all the gospel offers and promises, even in His condescending overtures and exhortations, beseeching men to be reconciled to Him, and to render Him reasonable service." He says, "there is a true sense in which God is 'not willing that any should perish, but would that all should come to repentance.' But," the writer goes on to say, "this is, of course, not His will of decree or purpose, that this latter should come to pass, whatever else it may be; otherwise it would contradict much that, as we have seen, God has elsewhere affirmed."

Just here it is that the writer reveals, as we think, a bias in favor of the Calvinistic theory of reprobation, which disqualifies him for properly interpreting the Scripture on this subject. Why, we may ask, does he make the Scripture, which treats of the divine decrees, the measure or rule by which we are to interpret other Scripture which presents the offer of salvation to all men? And why does he urge that we must hold on to his theory in regard to the former, whatever may become of the latter? The portions of Scripture which teach of the divine decrees are, on all hands, regarded as the more difficult portion of it. Even the strictest sect of Presbyterians acknowledge that they contain a doctrine which should be handled with the utmost care. May

they not be just those to which St. Peter refers where he says that his brother Paul had uttered some things hard to be understood, and which some wrested to their own destruction? Why then should the more abstruse and more obscure here be made the norm by which to interpret the more plain and clear? God's love for man, His desire for their salvation, the provision made for all in Christ, all this lies upon the surface of Scripture from beginning to end. Now we will not say that the understanding of this side of Scripture must rule the other, which refers to election; but let each stand forth in its full authority for our faith, and let our theory be formed by accepting the demands of each.

That there is a universalism somewhere in the purpose of God for man's salvation, was felt in the earlier history of Protestantism, when Amiraud, of the school of Saumur in France, brought forward his theory that this decree had reference to man before the fall, while the particular decree originated after the fall,—*infra-lapsarianism* instead of *supra-lapsarianism*. The Bible clearly teaches that salvation is for man, and God chose man, or humanity *in Christ* before the foundation of the world. And according to this Christ took on Him the seed of man, and became a brother to all mankind, and the redemption He wrought out is as universal as the fall. This does not of course imply that all men will be saved. We know they will not be. But in seeking to find the reason why some are lost we are not to give the Scripture relating to this latter point precedence over that relating to the former. We are not to say, as Dr. Atwater does, this latter we must understand to refer to God's purpose and decree that some must be lost, whatever becomes of His disposition towards, and His provision for, mankind as a whole.

While we are on this point we may add that it was just such a false theory of election, as held by the Jews, that led St. Paul to write those mysterious passages in his epistle to the Romans bearing on this subject. They held that they were elected in such sense as to restrict the salvation which God promised. It was for them alone and not for the Gentiles, and in such sense too as to interfere with the freedom of God and overlook the sinfulness of the chosen people. We can hardly suppose that Paul would construct an argument against this false theory of predestination by

showing that salvation is for Gentiles as well as Jews, and yet teach another theory of election which would set up other limits to the provision of salvation in Christ for all men. And so also it was just against this false theory of election in the minds of stubborn Jews that led Christ to speak on this subject when he said, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. All that the Father giveth me will come to me. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold," &c. In both cases the declarations are made against a false particularism and determinism attributed to God, and we should infer from this fact that we are to be cautious how we make any metaphysical theory now bear against God's universal provision of salvation for man.

Dr. Atwater and Rothe both appeal to the religious sense or consciousness of men to attest their theories. The former thinks every Christian is a Calvinist when on his knees. His prayers for God's grace to overcome the sinner, to convert him, for his own assurance of hope, or his present fruition of it, are based on the assumption, he thinks, that God does determine and fix all things relating to man's salvation immutably sure. There is some truth in this. Every Christian certainly must feel assured of his calling and election in order to have courage and faith in his prayers. He must believe that "He who has begun a good work in him will perform it unto the last day of Jesus Christ."

But now turn to what Rothe says in the closing words of the quotation from him, and see how he uses the argument just the other way. He says: "The position we have taken as to the divine world-plan and the divine world-government, is imperatively and directly called for by the very religious interest itself. For by the entertainment of any other view, the act of prayer becomes not only absurd but also a piece of thoughtlessness, which would be, religiously, entirely inexcusable. The pious consciousness in the direct and absolute certainty of the real effectualness of true and properly so-called prayer, will and must, despite any and all seemingly consequent theology, unhesitatingly reject as false any and every conception of the divine world-government which admits of no scope for prayer; that is, which precludes the possibility of a really determining influence on our part upon the will of God and upon the guidance of the world."

The appeal here clearly does not lie all in favor of Dr. Atwater's theory. If all things are foreordained and come to pass with what Rothe calls *apodictic* certainty, then why should men pray? It is point raised from another standpoint, that of the all-sufficiency of natural law, by Professor Tyndall and his school. Can prayer affect the certainty of events fixed by law, or change the purpose of God? The Calvinist replies that the conditions are pre-determined as well as the end. God has ordained the prayers of His people as the condition of what He has purposed to do. But this destroys the idea of the freedom of prayer. It would require us to hold that the assiduity in prayer, or its negligence on the part of the Church, is fixed and determined beforehand. Then if the work of grace in the salvation of men flags, if sinners are not converted and the Church extended, God must have ordained the condition for this, just as when the Church is fervent and persevering and importunate in prayer, He ordains this as the condition for reviving and extending the work of grace in the hearts of men. Dr. Atwater seems himself to have a sense of this when he speaks of the Divine decree for the salvation of the Christian, quoting the words, "he who has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the last day of Jesus Christ," he adds, "not, indeed, without watchfulness, prayer and other needful effort, but in and by the use of all appropriate means, lest he fail of the grace of God and come short of his salvation. This is saint's perseverance enough for the Calvinist. More he does not ask. Less, none can hold who feel assurance of their own final salvation." Enough has been said to show that the difficulty in regard to prayer here does not all lie on one side, and that Rothe's appeal to the religious interest, or the Christian consciousness, has force, as well as the appeal of Dr. Atwater.

The article in the Princeton Review we are here noticing, goes on in the next place to urge that the doctrine of Calvinism in regard to the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and justification by His righteousness through faith, does not lead to antinomianism. Much that he urges here has force. If we are justified freely by grace, not for any righteousness that we have, but solely for the righteousness of Christ, made ours through faith, it does not follow that we will be indifferent in regard to the necessity of good works in our sanctification. But his criticism of the course Calvinism ran in the New

England theology, and the conclusion he draws from this, requires some notice.

The Edwardian theology ripened into fruit in Emmons, who taught that God is the direct author of all human actions, alike and after the same manner, the evil and the good. This was the extreme of Calvinism. It lay, we think, in Edwards' view of the will. This gave rise to a sort of preaching in which the whole subject-matter was the Divine decrees. If sinners were to be awakened, it was to be done by preaching, not the law, nor the love of God, but the decrees of God. If sinners were to be converted, it was by preaching, not Christ and His grace, but the decrees. "It was among the current phrases of the day, which even became the subject of grave theological discussion, that the true test of conversion was 'a willingness to be damned for the glory of God.'"

This called forth a reaction in the teaching of Dr. Taylor, called Taylorism, which led off, as we know, a controversy with Princeton, in which the whole subject of hyper-Calvinism was called to do battle for its defence. Princeton Calvinism has never since been taken to the heart of New England theology, but the controversy and its issues have passed away, and been swallowed up by new issues. We hear only the faint and dying echoes of it now and then as in the article we are noticing. New England has passed on to a new theology, or at least out of the old, for better or for worse. There is hardly a theology there at the present time, though there is much and vigorous theological thinking. The general breaking down of the old Calvinistic system, as it formerly was held and preached, may be the preparation for something higher and better.

But before we proceed to this point, we must notice first, and in order to it, the conclusion drawn by Dr. Atwater at this stage of his article. He says the difficulty was that, in the earlier times, the New England divines preached the decrees instead of Christ. "The one great remedy for the faults that necessitated this reaction was to have put Christ where the Divine decrees had been thrust into his proper place. Instead of this, the sinner's own ability was too much signalized there; he was directed too much to look at that as a source of relief, when his eyes should have been more directed to the Great Physician for the removal of his guilt, helplessness and pollution." To all which we heartily respond, amen.



He then adds: "We will only say that, if in all parts of the Church we could hear justification through the blood, and regeneration by the Spirit of Christ, proclaimed as the indispensable condition of salvation, with an earnestness and emphasis as if it were the battle-cry of a new reformation, we should have far brighter hopes of the immediate religious future, than from all more or less pronounced outgivings in Christology, soteriology and eschatology which betray more sympathy with Unitarians and Universalists, than with Luther, Calvin, Edwards, Paul, or Christ."

All this sounds very well; but does not what Dr. Atwater regards as sound Calvinistic theology commit just the mistake here complained of? Does it not make the abstract divine will the principle of salvation, instead of the divine-human person of Jesus Christ? And did he not write this leading article in the *Princeton Review* just to revive the interest in the doctrine of the divine decrees as held in the Calvinistic system, which interest appears now on all sides to be waning? Is not the recently published theology of Dr. Hodge, the leader of Presbyterian theology, made to revolve around just this idea of the divine decrees? Here is the trouble: if preaching is to centre in Christ, our theology must centre there also. Not even justification through the blood of Christ, nor regeneration by the spirit of Christ, as doctrines, may take the place of Christ Himself.

There is a way of preaching Christ which makes much of Him in sound, but very little in substance. If our salvation is sought in the abstract will or decree of God, and Christ then is regarded, not as its source, but only its instrumental cause, we may ring changes on the name of Christ while we are all the while depriving Him of His true honor. In this way the very preaching of the atonement itself, the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and the imputation of His righteousness to the sinner, may in the end strip Christ of His chief glory. These may be presented in the way of a commercial transaction, by which God's justice is satisfied and man forgiven, in such way as to be repulsive to the true Christian spirit, and contradict the Word of God. And it is the Calvinistic system which is so prone to do just this. When God is represented as standing over the race as an angry judge, demanding satisfaction for a broken law, and then Christ is brought forward as



the victim who must suffer the penalty, even to the last drop of blood, before God will relent and be propitious to man; and when then, according to an eternal decree, this satisfaction is placed over to the account of a definite number of the race who are thus saved by a divine purpose, while the rest are left to perish eternally—this manner of preaching Christ it is that repels, and forces honest minds, as in the case we believe of Dr. Bushnell, for instance, to seek some other solution of the great problem of the atonement, in which love may be the central principle, and Christ may perform a more active and positive work, in union with the Father. We say not that there is no great truth in the satisfaction theory, as presented by Anselm, but we say that in modern Calvinistic theology it has been made to crowd out, too much, other and equally important features of the great doctrine of the atonement.

Take this doctrine of predestination, which is made to be the corner-stone in Princeton theology. Is it treated from the standpoint of the person of Christ, *in whom*, St. Paul tells us, God hath chosen us from the foundation of the world? By no means. It is from the standpoint of the abstract divine will. The decree is, in some way, before Christ and out of Christ. It is an abstract scheme in the divine mind, and then Christ is chosen as the instrument by which it is carried out. Now if Christ is to be central in preaching, He must be central in theology also, for it is in our theological seminaries that our young men who go forth as ambassadors of Christ receive their methods of preaching. That which is central for faith and salvation, must be also central for thinking in reference to the plan of redemption. To make the divine will, abstractly considered, the starting-point, is just as one-sided as to make the human will the starting-point, as is done in Arminianism. There is need for a sound *Christology* in constructing our theology, which will regard Christ, in His divine-human person, as the only and absolute revealer of God to man, the source of salvation, and the solution of all the problems pertaining to human history.

We are aware that a *Christology* may itself be put in the place of the ever-living Christ. There is no saving power in a sound theology, and there is a deeper need amidst the confusion and distraction, the agonizing birth-throes of the Church in the present day, than any system of theology. What is needed most is active

living faith, not in the doctrine, but in the living person of Christ. But theology and doctrine here, as always, have their place and their office. Faith and doctrine are necessary, the one to the other, and the theology that will stand amidst the trials and sifting to which the Church is now being subjected, must find its starting point, its centre, and its end in the person of Jesus Christ, who is the author and source of our whole salvation, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily.

But our space requires us to bring these remarks to a close. Our object has been mainly to call attention to the manner of treatment of a salient point of Calvinism in two of the leading theological Reviews of this country, the one from Andover, the other from Princeton. We do not believe Dr. Atwater's able and moderate article will be able to call back even the Presbyterian Church to its former interest and zeal in the Calvinistic theory of predestination. As in reference to other important problems in theology, so in reference to this; the age requires a new treatment, and from a different stand-point than that of the Calvinistic theology. That theology has features, in common with old Augustinianism, from which it draws its main inspiration, which will last while truth endures, and to conserve, not to destroy these, we need to look at the whole subject from another and better point of view.

We have presented the extended extracts from a not very smooth translation of Rothe, taken from the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, not to endorse them, but to show what difficulties the Calvinistic theory of predestination presented to one who was quite as far removed from Arminianism as Calvin himself, and who, for child-like piety and power of thought, can stand alongside of John Calvin himself,—the celebrated and now lamented Richard Rothe.

T. G. A.

## ART. II.—THE HISTORIC CHRIST.

BY PROF. THOS. C. PORTER, D. D.

THERE are two genealogies of our Lord contained in the New Testament—one in the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, the other in the third chapter of the Gospel of Luke. Both were, no doubt, copied from carefully preserved registers existing at the time in the national archives at Jerusalem. The first begins with Abraham, and traces, from King David down, the line of royal succession. This is plain from the fact that of Jechonias, who died childless, it is said he *begat* his uncle Salathiel, which word, "begat" can only be understood in a technical or legal sense. The second traces the line of natural descent up to David, and beyond him to Adam. Each pedigree supplements the other and furnishes necessary links in the chain. Both end in Joseph. The conjecture of some Protestant expositors that the line of St. Luke ends in Mary and not in Joseph, based on the assumption that his name, as the reputed husband, was put for hers, according to Jewish custom, is not sustained by evidence. In either case, the rightful claim of Christ to the throne of his father David seems to require that he should be the only son of Mary. Being Joseph's first cousin, as is probable, as well as his wife, her son would become the true heir only in default of other male children. Between the two genealogies there are many apparent discrepancies, which have occasioned no little discussion amongst commentators and called forth attacks from hostile critics. To show how they can be harmonized is not the design of the present essay. It is enough to state that a satisfactory reconciliation may be found in an excellent article from the pen of Archdeacon Hervey, in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.

Taking for granted, then, that we have in them veritable and

faithful records, let us endeavor to deduce some of the lessons they teach concerning the human side of our Lord's person.

Viewed simply as a man, as the son of Mary, he stands fully within the sphere of the natural. His birth is surrounded by no mythical halo, such as invests that of the fabulous deities, demigods and heroes of antiquity. It occurred in no sequestered nook or cave among the mountain solitudes, on no desert shore far from the haunts of men, but in a spot most public and open, in a crowded city, under the curious eyes of a multitude of witnesses, and in an age when the annals of history, free from the nimbus of remoter periods, are illuminated by clear light. In the classic pages of Greece and Rome we read of Venus rising from the foam of the sea, Minerva springing full-armed from the head of Jupiter, Hercules strangling serpents whilst yet an infant in the cradle, Romulus and Remus sucking a she-wolf; and even where such legendary marvels are wanting, the supposed origin of the incarnate divinities of the heathen is involved in an obscurity altogether beyond the range of the actual. They confront us rather as poetic personifications of principles, ideas and qualities than as tangible existences. The total absence of myth and magic in the accounts which the Evangelists give of the Babe of Bethlehem is, therefore, wonderful. The presence of the supernatural is, indeed, acknowledged, but it does not destroy, contradict, or in the least degree overshadow the natural, nor for a moment shake our faith in the fact that he was truly born "flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone." All the immediate incidents related bear on their face the unmistakable marks of verity: the taxation of the Roman Government; the coming up of Joseph and Mary from Galilee to their own city to be taxed (she great with child); the occupation of all places of accommodation by the crowds of people; the taking refuge in a stable under the pressure of poverty and need; the delivery; the putting on of the swaddling bands and the laying of the babe in a manger. How graphic! How real in every particular! How touching and how beautifully human also is the filling up of the picture in this passage, translated by Coleridge from a metrical paraphrase of the Gospels, by the German Ottfried (A. D. 776-856.)!

"She bared with joy her virgin breast,  
She hid it not, she bared the breast,

That suckled the divinest Babe.  
Blessed, blessed were the breasts,  
Which the infant Saviour kissed ;  
And blessed, blessed was the mother,  
Who wrapped his limbs with swaddling clothes,  
Singing placed him on her lap,  
Hung o'er him with looks of love  
And soothed him with a lulling motion .  
Blessed, for she sheltered him  
From the damp and chilling air.  
Blessed, blessed, for she lay  
With such a babe in one blest bed,  
Close as babes and mothers lie.  
Blessed, blessed evermore.  
With her virgin lips she kissed,  
With her arms and to her breast,  
She embraced the Babe divine,  
The Babe divine the virgin mother.  
There lives not on this ring of earth  
A mortal who can sing her praise.  
Mighty mother, virgin pure,  
In the darkness of the night,  
For us she bore the heavenly Lord."

No infidel has ever seriously ventured to call in question the true humanity of Christ. The testimony, both sacred and profane, is too full, minute, circumstantial and concurrent to afford any ground for challenge on that point. He cannot be remanded into the realm of fable. Although His divine character has been denied again and again, either in whole or in part, and attempts made to eliminate or explain away everything supernatural in the Gospel records, the *man* always survives; shorn, it is true, of His celestial glory, but still such that His equal cannot be found among all the tribes of earth, or in all the volumes of fictitious story. The enemies of the *God* are compelled to do homage to the *man*. The confession of the French free-thinker, Rousseau, is well-known and often quoted. To this may now be added that of the English rationalist, the late John Stuart Mill. At the close of his posthumous work on Theism, he says: "It is Christ, rather than God, whom Christianity has held up to believers as the pattern of perfection to humanity. It is the God incarnate more than the God of the Jews or of nature, who, being idealized, has taken so great and salutary hold on the modern mind. And whatever may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left: a unique figure, not more unlike all His precursors than all His followers, even those who had the direct benefit of His personal teach-

ing. It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospel is not historical, or that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. The tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels, and may have inserted all the miracles which He is reputed to have wrought. But who among His disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels?"—and again—"About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of originality, combined with profundity of insight, which must place the Prophet of Nazareth in the very first rank, among the men of sublime genius, of whom our species can boast."

A real man, then, He is—the Man of men! But the human Christ does not enter the arena of our earthly existence as a stranger from another and a different sphere, in a body assumed for a temporary purpose—a sudden and transient apparition, like that of the angels of the Old Economy; nor does He appear as a fresh and independent creation, *sui generis*, separate and apart from the system of nature, but as the genuine product of preceding generations, flowing from the primal fountain of the race. He is "the seed of the woman," the highest and final outcome of a vast combination of powers and forces in nature, acting all along the ages before, not only through the generations of mankind, but beyond them and behind them, from the very foundation of the world. Upon Him the ends of that world rest, and hence we rightly count our years backward and forward from the hour of His birth. "For him *are* (and that includes *were*) all things, and by Him:" "*by* Him," as their divine Creator—"for Him," not as their proprietor merely, or to show forth His praise, but because they were brought into being in order that He might be. And this may be the right meaning of St. Paul's words, "He is the first-born of every creature." His own declaration, "I am the Root and the Offspring of David," is a strange paradox, but both sides of it are equally true; and of like significance is that more comprehensive one, "I am Alpha and Omega,"—Alpha, the creative source; Omega, the flower and crown of all created natural life. In this double sense He is also emphatically *the* Life of the world.

The study of nature is the pride and boast of our modern era.

Every region of her wide domain is explored with untiring energy and zeal. Facts and phenomena in vast numbers have been observed and collected; and these, sifted, compared, weighed and interpreted, constitute a revelation of surpassing interest. Geology, aided by the allied sciences, starting with the dawn of the earth's history, proves the gradual and successive growth of the continents, and, *pari passu*, the rise of organic life and the course of its development from the lowest and simplest forms and types up to the most perfect and complete. Chaos and chance give way to order and design. Among the physical forces there is an unbroken continuity of operation in obedience to law; an unbroken continuity of life also, explain it as we may. Evolution of some kind must be admitted. That which succeeds is either derived from that which goes before, or is rendered possible only by it. This seems to be God's mode of working both in nature and in human history as far as it belongs to the system of nature. Even where the keen eye of science fails to detect the necessary, hidden connections which bind all things together, that they certainly do exist is the profound conviction of enlightened reason. The unfolding of the mighty drama progresses slowly step by step, until, at length, it reaches its culmination in man, who is thus included in it and subject to its laws. But *man* is not a single person, a solitary unit. He flows out into space and time in countless generations, which waste away and perish as other living creatures do, and as the mammoths and the saurians did in by-gone ages, and like them is probably doomed to extinction. And is this all? The disciple of materialism, who confines his vision to the mere circle of nature, cherishes the notion that spirit and force are convertible terms, and barely admits the possible existence of a great, unknowable First Cause, will answer "Yes! This is the end of the chapter." But a deep logical intuition, fortified by all the analogies of the past and present, declares that, if this be so, if death and oblivion are to gain an ultimate triumph and reduce the globe to its original state of air, water and rock, the magnificent drama of organic life is a melancholy and ignominious failure, a delusive mockery, and demands that the tree of the human race should produce somewhere on its manifold branches "a bright, consummate flower" and precious fruit, which should be at once the quintessence of the old



and the starting-point of a new and higher order of existence. Where, then, among the numerous kindreds and tribes of the race, its millions of individuals living, dead, or yet to be, scattered over the varied zones of earth and centuries of time, shall we look for such last and highest expression of humanity, such a gathering up of all its best elements, physical, mental and moral, into one perfect whole, if it be not found in the man, Christ Jesus? In Him alone the idea has become a concrete reality, and that it is so is supported by the most reliable evidence.

On account of their bearing upon this point, the genealogies of the New Testament possess great value. They are unique. No monuments of the kind have been discovered elsewhere. They indicate the central channel of the central stream of human history from its fountain-head, and furnish the true key to unlock its meaning. The record as it stands in the Scriptures of the Old Testament is simply an expanded chronicle of facts and events that bear upon the main issue. The nation which plays the chief part in the work of preparation is the subject of special tutelage and discipline, under the operation of agencies both natural and supernatural, and is thus gradually moulded and elevated, so as to render it capable of becoming, in the end, the parent of Him who was to be born "in the fulness of time." Divine purpose and plan, divine direction, inspiration, prophecy, miraculous interposition, are, indeed, manifest, yet do not cause the least disturbance or change in the character of the generative force which flows onward to its supreme result in full harmony with the common laws of our natural life.

Some of the principal facts and events in the history of the ancient Hebrews, in their relation to this supreme result, may be briefly noted. And, first of all, ample time was allowed for development. Abram, himself a noble scion of the leading branch of Noah's descendants, and hence of no mean and degraded stock, is called from Ur of the Chaldees no less than 2000 years before the advent of our Lord. The remarkable promise is made to him, that in his seed, not "seeds," as the Apostle tells us, "as of many, but of one, that is Christ"—all the families of the earth should be blessed, and, in this regard, the rite of circumcision, as the seal of the Covenant, is clothed with peculiar significance. During the four hundred years in Egypt, his few grandsons multiply into a

nation, not in the state of abject servitude often supposed, but in contact with an advanced civilization, through which Moses acquires, at the court of Pharaoh, the special training that fitted him for the performance of the mighty work destined to exercise such a powerful influence over the future of Israel.

After the return to the land of Canaan, the nation is isolated from the rest of the world by two circumstances—the geographical position of the country and its political and religious institutions—no doubt, with express design, in order to exclude, on the one hand, any admixture of foreign blood, and to intensify, on the other, the effect of the Mosaic laws. Of all the countries in both hemispheres, none was so well adapted to secure the end in view. Although separated from neighboring kingdoms and empires by lofty mountains on the north, broad, sandy deserts on the east and south, and by the Mediterranean Sea on the west, it lay in the midst, and yet not too distant from, the great centres of heathen civilization, so that, when the King of kings should come, and the other barriers of partition be broken down, he might “go forth conquering and to conquer.” Cursed and sterile as it now is, in the olden time it was “a land flowing with milk and honey.” Situated in the middle belt between the icy north, where life is little else than a prolonged and desperate struggle for food and warmth, and the torrid south, where heat is in excess and the earth, of her own accord, brings forth her too abundant stores, verging toward the southern border of the North Temperate Zone, and thus within the latitudes where man has always attained his highest vigor of body and of mind, it possessed everything requisite for the physical well-being of the Hebrew people.

On such a people, and in such a land, the laws of Moses are brought to bear with full effect. And who can measure the influence exerted by these laws in their observance, even though partial and incomplete, through the ages that follow? Their discipline, severe, exacting and burdensome in many respects, displays a wisdom worthy of their divine Author, and could not fail to elevate the Hebrew to a level far above that of the surrounding nations. No better statutes were ever devised to promote a strong and healthy physical development. We need only to point to the high and honorable place assigned to marriage, the stern penalties

awarded to adultery and fornication, the enactments for strengthening family ties, the numerous washings and purifications enjoined, the prohibition of injurious kinds of animal food, the equitable division and distribution of the land, the discouragement of commerce which creates overgrown wealth and engenders luxury, and lastly, the careful protection of the rights and freedom of the individual.

But the great distinctive moulding power proceeded from the worship of 'Jehovah, the Most High God of Israel, before whom "all the gods of the nations are idols and vanity." It formed the soul and centre of the entire system, and its rites and ceremonies are prescribed in elaborate detail. To this centre the ancient Hebrew looked with unwavering devotion and profound reverence, and in this school, received that intellectual, æsthetic and religious culture, which gave him, in the course of time, a just title to the foremost place amongst the children of Adam.

Whoever studies the Scriptures of the Old Testament with open eye cannot fail to observe the importance everywhere ascribed to hereditary transmission. The Mosiac laws were designed to suppress evil qualities and strengthen and perpetuate the good. And, whenever the latter appear in unusual number and excellence in prophet, priest or king, he becomes, in so far, a type of the expected Messiah. It must not be forgotten, too, that the Hebrews were a nation, in the strictest sense of the word—one family descended from one common father. Each tribe, moreover, pursued its own path of development and retained in no small degree the salient traits which distinguished its patriarchal sire. So intense and vigorous did their nationality become, in its isolation and under its peculiar regimen, that, even now, after the lapse of so many centuries and the widest dispersions, the blood of the Jew refuses to mingle freely with that of other nearly-allied peoples, with whom he holds the closest intercourse and of whose civilization he is a full partaker. A standing wonder of the world, it flows on, a separate stream in the general current, as the Arve, descending from the high Alps, is said to do in the midst of the more sluggish Rhone. The mighty power of hereditary transmission is more and more confirmed by the researches of modern science, and treatises have been written to show how it can be wisely modified and directed so as to produce the grandest results. Left to its own

operation, under the malign influence of sin, its tendency is only downward to debasement and destruction. It is plain, therefore, that the genesis of the human Christ could not possibly occur in a degraded offshoot of the race, like that of the Hottentots or the cannibals of the Fejee Islands, or even in many of those which occupy a far higher rank in the scale of nations.

As the supreme birth, then, both of nature and of history, the man Christ Jesus, issues from a chosen stock, springing not from one of its remote and humble branches, but from a royal virgin, who could trace her descent in a direct line to a king like David, and, beyond him, to Judah, the flower of Jacob's sons; for, being his cousin, she had the same lineage as Joseph, her reputed husband. From such an ancestry, Mary, no doubt, inherited the noblest qualities of body and of mind, improved and purified by the discipline of ages. Her lowly condition in life formed no bar to their transmission, is no proof of their declining vigor. That glorious hymn which rose from her lips, in tone so subdued and yet so lofty, is a striking testimony in her behalf. Like water filtered through long, subterranean courses, it gushes forth in crystal purity and reveals the character of its source. In beauty, in lyric power and in depth of meaning, it falls no whit behind any of the psalms of David, the song of Deborah or the triumphal chant of Miriam; while, as the conscious expression of the sum and fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, it surpasses them all. From such a mother came the human nature of our Lord; a mother whom all generations are bound to call blessed, and can safely do so without the bestowment of more honor than is justly due, or any disposition to magnify her into an object of fond idolatry.

Thus it is evident that the realness of Christ's humanity rests on a sure historic basis; but his full greatness as a man, who can comprehend? Our knowledge of him is derived chiefly from the Four Gospels. And yet, the Gospels, much as they contain, do not profess to give a complete picture of his earthly life. All that is essential is there, but how different the impression which even that makes upon the minds of men! The image, as it comes to us, is too often dimmed, dwarfed and distorted by our prejudices and our ignorance. Instead, therefore, of being less than the record, as rationalistic philosophers presume to imagine, there is reason to believe that he is far more.

"Anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows," the kings and great ones of mankind, the Son of Man shows His marked superiority in two respects. First; He is sinless and immaculate, "without spot or blemish, or any such thing." The keenest hostile scrutiny has failed to discover the least stain or moral defect in His matchless character. And this is the more remarkable, when we consider the rare and scrupulous fidelity with which the Sacred Writers disclose the errors, faults and deeds of shame, which modern hero-worship strives to soften or conceal. Second; all the human virtues and excellences, which are scattered and exhibited in an eminent degree, only singly and apart, now in this one and now in that one, combine in Him, a perfect, rounded and symmetric whole, so that He transcends the limits of His Hebrew descent and fills out the full proportions of the ideal man of the race. Our two-fold nature as represented in the sexes is also there. He who reads aright will find in Him the strong will of the man associated with the most delicate and tender sensibilities of the woman. For the true ideal of woman we need not look to Mary. All the mother is in the son. It is woman's voice that speaks in His sad and touching lament: "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that stonest the prophets, and killest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy *children* together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not."

In regard to His personal appearance—His shape, His stature, His gait, His looks, His gestures, His complexion, His temperament, the tones of His voice, and other particulars of the kind—the Evangelists are almost silent. No picture, bust or statue has been handed down to succeeding ages, to enable us to conceive, in some measure, what manner of man He was—and that, no doubt, for good reason. But, when we remember that His descent was most royal, that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and that in the same body in which He walked the earth, suffered on the cross and rose from the dead, He shall be visible to the myraids of the redeemed forever, we cannot suppose in Him anything less than the greatest perfection of which the human form is capable. The actual beholding of the King in His beauty is reserved for a higher world. As we walk by faith here, an imperfect corporeal similitude might prove rather a hindrance than a help.

It is a serious error to ignore or undervalue the human nature of our Lord. The opinion is sometimes entertained that He became incarnate mainly in order to have a body to offer up as a sacrifice for sin, and that, in other respects, little account is to be made of His humanity. But, it would be easy to show how disparagement of the man will, of necessity, weaken and undermine faith in the God. Indeed, our knowledge of the human side of His nature must have precedence in the order of time, just as it had in the experience of the disciples of old, who first learned to know Him as true man, and love Him as true man, before they learned to know Him as true God, and love Him as true God. Only by degrees did the revelation of the higher nature dawn upon them, until, at length, it reached clear consciousness in the grand confession of Peter, in answer to the question: "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

In the "Word made flesh," the divine does not overwhelm, absorb, or in any way interfere with the human, on the one side, nor does the human lessen or limit the divine, on the other. It is not a case of *possession*, but of *union*—union, real, indivisible, everlasting—the natures two and distinct, the person one—a holy mystery, which the Church has, in all ages, maintained with jealous care, believed with reverent and implicit faith and cherished as the very ark of her salvation.

An examination of the leading religions of the heathen world will set in stronger light the relation of the two natures in Christ's person. In the East, the Hindoos boast of a trinity of supreme deities; Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Siva, the destroyer. To the second of these, Vishnu, are inscribed numerous incarnations, or avatars, for the benefit or relief of mankind, most of them in human form, but one of them in the likeness of a fish and another in that of a tortoise. Here we see a vain endeavor to solve the great problem, which met its true and final solution in Him, who is "the Desire of all nations." The divine is brought down from above and becomes incarnate, but the conception is only that of *possession*, *temporary possession*, for a specific purpose. The incarnations are not stable. They follow each other in long succession, for the man or the animal (and it matters not which) is a simple organ or instrument of the god, used for a brief while

and then abandoned. What a world-wide difference between such an avatar and "the Word made flesh!" But more than this: none of these avatars have the remotest connection with the actual historic life of the race, and hence they belong wholly to the realm of the fabulous.

In the West, the Greeks and Romans and the nations of Northern Europe sought a solution of the problem from the opposite side—by exalting the human at the expense of the divine. Their gods, goddesses, demigods and heroes, are nothing more than men and women with enlarged powers—copies in which even the vices are not always omitted. Sex and natural generation are also transferred. The greatest of them, Zeus or Odin, is limited and circumscribed in his sphere of action. Mere personifications of the varied forces of nature or of human history, their worship was in substance only a worship of these forces. Not one of them can show any actual connection with the historic life of the race, and hence, like the avatars of Vishnu, they belong wholly to the realm of the fabulous.

The best mythologies of the heathen should not be regarded, as they often are, as pure inventions of the devil, in order to delude mankind. They contain much that is beautiful and true. But above all, they express the deep yearning desire of the Gentile nations after "the unknown God," and bear witness to the need of just such a Saviour as Christ the Lord, at whose coming they vanish like stars before "the king of day." "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." A prophet standing beside the new-born Babe, as he lay in the manger at Bethlehem, might have addressed the fairest luminaries of their bright galaxy in these words:

"Ye meaner beauties of the night,  
That poorly satisfy our eyes,  
More by your numbers than your light,  
•Ye common people of the skies,  
What are ye, when the Sun shall rise?"

The effect which that rising did produce, upon them is well described in Milton's celebrated "Hymn on the Nativity," in reading which we feel that the imagination of the poet has not exaggerated the sober truth of history. The old gods of Egypt, Syria, Greece, Rome and Scandinavia, have all vanished before "the dreaded Infant's hand." Their power is clean gone. They only survive to adorn and beautify the pages of literature, and the names of those



of our Saxon forefathers preserved in the days of the week may be allowed to stand without fear of awakening in any bosom the slightest disposition to idolatrous worship. They all have vanished: but the historic Christ, the Son of Man as well as the Son of the living God, still lives and reigns, secure upon His throne, and will so continue to live and reign, with ever-increasing dominion, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

---

### ART. III.—PASTOR FLIEDNER AND THE ORDER OF DEACONESSES.

BY D. SCHLEY SCHAFF.

---

WE propose to give a brief outline of the life of Theodor Fliedner, limiting ourselves to such facts as are indispensable to an intelligible account of the philanthropic agencies which he brought into being. Since these agencies give to his name its peculiar interest, the great bulk of the article will be devoted to an account of their origin, character and development, with special reference to the history of the Kaiserswerth Order of Deaconesses.

Theodor Fliedner was born on the twenty-first of January, 1800, at Eppstein, a little village in western Germany, eleven miles from Wiesbaden. We pause at the mention of this name, associated as it is with gaming and licentiousness. And as we think of the evil influences for which it was the rallying point for so many years, and of the notoriety it obtained, we cannot refrain from contrasting with it the retirement of its next neighbor, and the reputation it deserves (but has not) as the birthplace of one of the most active and successful philanthropists of the century. Theodor was one of twelve children. His father, the village pastor, died soon after his son's confirmation, in 1813. The destitute condition in which he left his widow awakened the sympathies of his friends. It was the generosity of two of these that enabled the young orphan to secure a thorough classical and collegiate education. He passed successively from the Gymnasium to the Universities of Giessen

and Göttingen. At the Gymnasium he began to manifest his proclivities by the perusal of every available work of travels. This continued to be, throughout his student-life, his principal source of recreation, giving stimulant and strength to that spirit of enterprise which ever stood out as a prominent feature in his character. At Göttingen, he came under the influence of that celebrated, though somewhat rationalistic, theologian, Eichhorn. Of all his professors, this one seems to have had the largest share in developing his mind. He completed his theological studies at the Seminary of Herborn, in the then Grand Duchy of Nassau.

As is quite usual with German students, Fliedner followed up the completion of his theological course with a year's experience at teaching, and accepted the position of private tutor in a family of Cologne. During the engagement grave doubts arose in his mind concerning his call to the ministry. The nearer the year drew to its close, the more firmly he resolved to abandon all idea of preaching, and to devote his life to teaching. But it was not the will of Providence that this resolution should be carried into execution. *L'homme propose, mais Dieu dispose.* He had hardly begun the necessary preparation for the teachers' examination, when there came to him a call from the little congregation of Kaiserswerth. His resolutions suffered an immediate reversal. The voice of the little community was as effectual in converting him from his purpose, as the direct call was effectual in metamorphosing a Saul of Tarsus into a Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. It was like a wave of wind which chased away all his mental difficulties as unrestrainedly as did the cry, which tradition says rose from the assembled council at Milan, "Ambrose, Bishop!", all further thought of legal practice and civil authority from the mind of a man whom God thus called to become a strong pillar of the Christian Church. Fliedner seems not to have hesitated a moment in rendering a decision. Not even was the penurious salary of 180 Prussian dollars sufficient to raise an obstacle to his acceptance.

The town of Kaiserswerth is situated on the river Rhine, a few miles below Düsseldorf. The population had originally, without an exception, been Roman Catholic. But in the latter part of the last century a Protestant element had been introduced in the transfer from Crefeld of experienced laborers, to work in its silk manu-

factory. This handful of evangelical men had kept on increasing for half a century, until at the time when Fliedner received the call, in 1822, they numbered in all two hundred.

The young and beardless pastor began his labors. But he had not been settled in his parish four weeks before the manufactory closed. This event threw most of his parishioners out of employment, and left them wholly unable to provide for the maintenance of a spiritual instructor. This was a severe trial for the sanguine minister. The Prussian government offered him a position, with a salary both larger and certain of payment. He saw destitution staring him in the face at Kaiserswerth; plenty and comforts in the new field. This was the dilemma. The certainty of the one seemed to correspond with the inevitableness of the other. How many in like circumstances would hesitate long in their decision in favor of the new sphere? Fliedner gave the proposition of the government no serious consideration. If his congregation had needed him in the time of their prosperity, surely they needed him much more since adversity had entered their dwellings. He did not consider the dark and lowering clouds that overcast his sky; his thoughts were fixed on the troubles of his people, who now were so much in need of the comforting and consoling influences of the Gospel, to ward off despondency. It was not in the man to forsake the vessel when the fuel had all been consumed from the hulk.

What the means of the congregation made impossible for them to do for themselves, he decided should be done for them. Their poverty should not be a cause to debar them from hearing the Word. He formed the resolution of collecting a fund, whose annual interest should be sufficient for the support of a pastor. In these trying circumstances he had been buoyed up by faith and fired by an indomitable will. The poor success which his efforts to this end met in the vicinity of Kaiserswerth, induced him to extend his journey to Holland and England. This occurred in 1823 and 1824, and must be especially noticed. In regard to the results, sufficient be it to say, that his call met with a hearty response, and he returned with the sum proposed.

We may now be said to have arrived at the close of the first great division of his life. We now enter upon the second, which

is distinguished from the other by the public character of his labors. It begins with the year 1824, and extends to the time of his death, 1864.

In addition to his arduous duties at Kaiserswerth, he was engaged, in the years comprised between 1824 and 1849, in extensive travels, and in the foundation of most of the institutions of which we shall speak below. In 1849 his engagements had so increased as to make imperative the resignation of his charge, which he had revived, and which he had sustained with happy results for twenty-seven years. The next two years were spent in prolonged travels in connection with institutions similar to those of Kaiserswerth. It was at this period that he made his first visit to the East and his only one to the United States.

In 1854 the University of Bonn conferred on him its highest academic honor. In a country where the degree of Doctor of Divinity is bestowed with great caution, and only on men eminent for literary attainments and sometimes on those whose labors have created some new mode of exerting Christian philanthropy, this recognition of his energy, zeal and success is a sure pledge of the high esteem in which his efforts were held.

The last seven years of his life were spent in comparative quiet at Kaiserswerth. He had been a sufferer for many years from his lungs; but God had not allowed his zeal to abate, nor physical or mental weakness to close his active service until it was closed on the fourth of October, 1864, by death. "He hath overcome death—conqueror" he uttered in a feeble whisper, and then came the last. These glorious words, pregnant with meaning on the lips of a departing soldier of Christ, were the last utterances of one who is a prominent example of an earnest, humble and self-sacrificing Christian, and the last testimony to the power of the Gospel on his soul. A long train of mourners at his funeral from near and far in that vicinity testified to the honor in which he was universally held.

Let us now proceed to the consideration of those benevolent institutions which make Fliedner's life a matter of history in the Christian Church. In grouping them together, we shall have respect to arrangement as well as to chronological sequence. Our principal reason for presenting them thus in a compact group is

that their magnitude and importance may commend themselves to our minds in all their force.

We may conveniently treat of the Kaiserswerth institutions under two heads, and they deserve to be so treated: *First*, REPRODUCTIONS of institutions which Fliedner met with in Great Britain, the Netherlands, or parts of Germany outside of the Rhenish provinces, and, *Second*, CREATIONS of his own; i. e. such institutions as he originated.

I. Under the head of REPRODUCTIONS, or imitations, belong:

1. A PRISON ASSOCIATION. On his visits to Holland and England in 1823 and 1824, he had interested himself in all the agencies for the amelioration of the physical and moral condition of the poor and outcast. He saw a new world of Christian activity in orphan asylums, poor houses, hospitals, Bible societies, and other institutions of a similar character, with which he had then for the first time become intimately acquainted. He was especially impressed with the comfortable arrangements of the prisons, and with the efforts that were being put forth for the moral elevation and spiritual enlightenment of their occupants. The neglected condition of the prisons of his own land presented a sad contrast to those of England. He returned to his home deeply ashamed of the inertness and hebetation of Christian men in Germany in this direction. No William Allen or Elizabeth Fry had yet appeared beyond the waters of the English Channel to dispel the spiritual atrophy that darkened every cell. The thick prison walls had veiled it from Christian workers.

Fliedner felt the need. He wrote no pamphlets, he called no public meetings. He was convinced of the want and set to work quietly to supply the remedy. He requested and obtained permission from the proper authorities to preach at the Düsseldorf jail. It is an interesting circumstance that the person who afforded him the most material aid in the enterprise was a Roman Catholic by the name of Wingender. This stamped it in its very first beginning with a catholic spirit. October the ninth, 1825, witnessed the first service held by Fliedner at the Düsseldorf penitentiary, which was the first ever held there, and, perhaps, the first, in any of the prisons of the Rhenish Provinces. He speaks in the following terms of the accommodations: "Our audience room was two

adjacent cells. The straw mattresses (bags) had been removed to one corner, and the audience sat on the floor. The sill of the door connecting the apartments supplied the place of an elaborate pulpit. The male part of my hearers sat in the cell to my right, the women on my left, etc." He continued the service on the afternoons of alternate Sundays, and not without considerable inconvenience to himself, as he was obliged to walk both ways to and from Kaiserswerth.

In 1826 he visited *incognito* all the principal prisons in the Rhenish Provinces. After careful observation he gives the following account: "The church had forgot the prisons, so far as the spiritual wants of the convicts were concerned, and none the less the State, in its provision for the health and morals. There was no provision for the instruction of the younger portion of the imprisoned; and so far as the older portion went, they were huddled together without regard to sex. They were training schools for the indulgence of the lowest passions. There was no proper provision for ventilation; and while the filth was intolerable, and the rations scanty and unwholesome, the inspectors lived in luxury." We also cull from his table of statistics to the effect that of the 320 convicts at Düsseldorf, 90 could not read and 150 were unable to write; of 280 at Cologne, 130 could not read. The conviction which the neglect of prisoners had excited, this thorough investigation strengthened into a determination to bring about, if at all possible, a general prison reform. There was no doubt of the duty of Christian people in this matter. He agitated the subject among his friends and succeeded in forming a Prison Association at Düsseldorf. This was the first institution of the kind in Germany. The object it proposed to itself, was the establishment of pastors and teachers, of both the Romish and Protestant churches, at the principal prisons, and the procurement of suitable occupation for the convicted after their release. That the project was a novel one is seen in the fact that it was eighteen months before it secured the sanction of the Prussian government.

2. A BIBLE SOCIETY. Fliedner, no doubt received the idea from the Bible Society founded early in the eighteenth century by Canstein, and from the similar institutions in England. This society was organized at Düsseldorf in 1826, and still continues its work of

distributing copies of the Bible in the Rhenish Provinces and Westphalia.

3. **AN ASYLUM** for released FEMALE CONVICTS. On a second visit to Great Britain, in 1832, Fliedner came into personal contact with Elizabeth Fry and Dr. Chalmers. They initiated him into a more deep acquaintance with the needs of the poor and degraded. The labors of Miss Fry in the prisons, combined with the acknowledged neglect of fallen women in his own land, served to turn his attention in a peculiar way to some methods for helping them. He conferred with friends on the subject immediately upon his return. But while every one recognized the desirability of such an enterprise of Christian charity, few acknowledged the possibility of maintaining it. His only active coadjutor in the scheme was Mrs. Fliedner, a most faithful Christian wife. After making a definite plan, for he had no money to construct any buildings or buy any furniture, he commenced the opening at Kaiserswerth, in September, 1833, of a house of refuge for released female convicts. To this he soon annexed a MAGDALEN ASYLUM, *i. e.*, an institution for the reformation of prostitutes. The first patient was not long in making an appearance. In the absence of more suitable accommodations Fliedner consigned her to a little out-house in his garden (*Garten haus*). During the first year the patients numbered ten.

The fortieth annual report states that up to July 1873, the asylum had given temporary protection to 627 women of this character. Most of this number, we are informed, have left it reformed and converted, and are now engaged in different spheres of usefulness. The institution expects its occupants to defray their own expenses, so far as they can. Its object is to make them adepts at sewing, knitting and kitchen work. This is of course subservient to the one great end of moral reformation. This was the first institution of its kind in Germany. The practicability of the scheme proposed is proved both by the above statistics, and the establishment of similar asylums in other parts of Europe. The results obtained in Europe should, it seems to us, set us to the consideration of the question, whether there is not a similar work to be done here in America.

4. **AN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL** for POOR CHILDREN. This institution, founded by Fliedner in 1835, has merely a local significance.



It grew out of the needs of the poor population of Kaiserswerth, and affords instruction free of charge in knitting, sewing and other useful household duties.

5. An ORPHANAGE for girls at Kaiserswerth. This too has merely a local importance.

6. A HOSPITAL for female lunatics, established 1849.

This completes the list, we think, of the charitable institutions which Fliedner founded after models which he found outside the limits of the Rhenish Provinces. They have all been in an eminent degree productive of results, and are, without an exception, still in operation. Some of them have become the progenitors of similar institutions scattered over different parts of Germany. Thus the dim sparks lit by the faith of Fliedner, have kindled many hearts into increased sympathy for the poor and degraded, and resulted in more zealous efforts for the physical and moral elevation of the abandoned and helpless. Keeping in mind the labors of others, we may well characterize the period of the foundation of these institutions as an era in benevolent and Christian enterprise in Germany.

II. CREATIONS. Fliedner did not confine himself to the introduction of methods of benevolence which had analogues beyond the Rhenish Provinces. He originated several new modes of exerting Christian charity, to which we shall now direct our attention. In the hands of God, he was designed to answer, to some extent, the question whether women have a sphere of labor in the Christian Church outside of their families. Let us now consider under this head, that institution which has been the subject for many articles, and concerning which there are current not a few erroneous opinions. We refer to the ORDER OF DEACONESSES.

Fliedner's rural observations in Great Britain were not circumscribed within the narrow limits of any one particular class of benevolent institutions. Like the eagle whose eye grasps all the objects below the circle of its flight and yet keeps its attention specially fixed on its prey, Fliedner seems to have watched all the methods of Christian effort, and yet, on each separate visit, to have confined his special consideration to a single one. On one trip he seems to have particularly devoted his spare time to an examination of the modes of treatment practiced in the hospitals. After an

experience with many of them in Great Britain, he says: "I have often seen buildings constructed at a lavish expenditure of money. But the contrast within their walls is sad. The sick are deplorably neglected.....The attendant physicians have often complained bitterly to me of the immorality and inaptitude of the nurses." This general unfitness of the nurses, so far as training and spiritual experience were concerned, was the consideration which led to the foundation of the Order of Deaconesses. It is an institution which was established directly for the remedy of a deficiency, a means to meet an end which commended itself to Fliedner as important. It was as much the immediate outgrowth of a felt want, as were the soup-houses in the city of New York the last winter.

The Order of Deaconesses founded by Fliedner was the *creation of his own mind*. We believe that an organized class of female workers under the name of Deaconesses existed in the Apostolic Church, and that they are referred to in Rom. xvi. 1, as also in other passages of the New Testament. We know positively that such an organization of female workers did exist in the Eastern Church, continuing until the twelfth or the thirteenth century. At the same time we must again affirm that there is *no designed historical connection between these and the Order brought into existence by Theodore Fliedner*. In order, then, to guard against such an error, we should be particular in the selection of an attribute. "Deaconesses" was the name given in the absence of any equally expressive and intelligible appellation. Shall we designate the organization the "Modern" Order of Deaconesses? We think not, for this would demand some closer definition. It seems best to apply the simple terms "Order of Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth." We shall thus avoid considering Fliedner's enterprise as a restitution of the ancient order of Deaconesses.

It must, however, not be understood that Fliedner was ignorant of the existence of an organized body of female laborers at other periods of the history of the Church. He, undoubtedly, knew about them and was confirmed in his project by this knowledge. A second circumstance, which may be mentioned as having strengthened his determination, was the labors of women in the Napoleonic war of 1813-15. The comfort and consolation which was then administered on many battle-fields had become a matter

of history. The contemplation of such an event could not but give him encouragement in his plan. We have already spoken of his personal acquaintance with Elizabeth Fry and her labors. The sympathetic piety of that noble woman and the abundant success of her efforts must, without a doubt, have been a third contribution to the confirmation of his purpose. The principal consideration, however, was the unfitness of hospital nurses for the care of the sick. His design was to establish a training school for nurses.

The plan had received its due amount of consideration. The question now came, where and by whom it was to be put into execution. Great enterprises at first must, as a rule, meet difficulties which are in proportion to their novelty. As has often been the case with great thinkers, who, like Coleridge, pursue new modes and lines of investigation—that they must *create* the taste which shall appreciate them, so new enterprises starting with small beginnings are generally pushed through by men of strong faith and indomitable will, and thus create for themselves, by their successful event, respect and patronage. This proved to be the case with the project before us. Fliedner preferred that its execution might be undertaken by some other than himself. He proposed in turn, as the location of the institution, Düsseldorf, Duisberg, Elberfeld and Barmen. But his good brethren alleged as an excuse the onerous character of their duties, and albeit approval was elicited from some by the mere statement of the project, others shrugging their shoulders offered gloomy predictions. All, however, agreed on these points: that Fliedner was the only man that could carry it out to a successful issue, and that Kaiserswerth was pointed out to be the seat of the institution by the very finger of God.

Fliedner returned home. If his noble heart had suffered any discouragement from the polite repulses of his brethren, or if his will had begun to show any inclinations to flag, his good wife encouraged him and dispelled his doubts by her cheering and inspiring influences. This good woman, as has been remarked before, was her husband's coadjutor in all his enterprises up to the time of her death in 1841. (?) He found a house suited to his purpose and bought it in April, giving his note for the \$2,300, which were to be paid in November. In this transaction he surely walked by

faith. His salary, as we have seen, was paltry, only sufficient for the supply of his family's most necessary wants. He had received no promises of pecuniary support; but the issue justified the seemingly rash undertaking. The necessary sum was procured by loans from two Christians distinguished for their benevolence.

However, this was not the only obstacle that opposed itself to the realization of the plan at that time and at Kaiserswerth. As soon as it became noised abroad that the building was to be used for the joint purposes of hospital and a training school for nurses, the Catholic population, incited by the priests, raised a commotion which threatened even the person of Fliedner with evil consequences. All danger from this direction was happily removed by the payment of an indemnity to the neighbors.

The constitution of the "Order of Deaconesses for the Rhenish Provinces and Westphalia" had been drawn up on the last day of May, and October had been appointed by Fliedner as the time for the opening. He occupied the interval in various other preparations and in securing the services of Gertrude as nurse. Her name now stands at the head of the illuminated scroll of "Sisters." She arrived on the thirteenth of October. But as yet no patients have announced themselves. It was as if the minister were standing in his robes on the pulpit, and the company had gathered to witness the marriage, and no groom and no bride had arrived. As last there came an invalid, a Catholic servant, who, in coming, braved the maledictions of her priest. Thus all the obstacles had been overcome by the unwavering and indefatigable efforts of Fliedner, and the institution began with good prospects of success.

Now that we know the history of the origin of the order of Deaconesses, let us first examine into its character as an organization and then look at the conditions of admittance to it. When Fliedner for the first time proposed his plan, a good friend raised the following consideration against its success: "We Protestants cannot employ that lever the use of which is the secret of so much of the success of similar organizations in the Roman Church, namely the doctrine that works of mercy are in themselves meritorious, and aid to secure the pardon of sin and the joys of heaven." This principle has, undoubtedly, been not one of the least important elements which have kept in rigorous operation the Roman orders

of female workers. Not less true was the statement that Protestants could not employ any such doctrine as an incitement for undertaking the work of a Deaconess. In doing this they would have pulled down one of the pillars which sustain their creed. As its constitution differs from those of the Sisterhoods of Charity in this fundamental principle, so it does in other salient points, some of which we will mention.

1. The Kaiserswerth Order of Deaconesses is independent of both Church and State. It is a self-supporting and self-governing organization. Unlike the Church in Germany, it is supported by private enterprise, and unlike the Sisterhoods of Charity, it is entirely free to move irrespective of the Church.
2. The Liturgical element is weak. The sisters are exhorted to free prayer, and are confined to no mechanical formulas in their devotions.
3. The Deaconess has the liberty of relinquishing her office at any time. She is a free agent, and often does return to her home or devotes herself to another sphere of labor. Again, she may marry at any time. This point is implied in the liberty of relinquishing her office. However, this point deserves to be particularly emphasized, that there may be no doubt about the matter. Last year seven were married. Marriage is of course, *ipso facto*, a resignation of the office of Deaconess.
4. It requires no vows whatever.
5. It discountenances, and would perhaps forbid, if necessary, the wearing of crucifixes, relics or other ornaments, which might be construed as phylacteries.
6. While it recommends simplicity in dress, it does not demand uniformity either in the cut or color of garments. All those externals, which might tend to attach to the order the idea of caste, are avoided.
7. A very prominent feature of difference must be sought for in the character of the work which the Deaconess proposes to herself. Proselytism not only underlies the activity of the Sister of Charity, but is its expressed end. The care of the sick is subservient to the winning of souls. She forces her religion on the patient. He must listen, *volens volens*. The principle on which the Deaconess labors is in almost direct antithesis to this. The great object of her life is the alleviation of the ills of the sick, and the instruction of the ignorant. This is the only expressed object of her laboring. She does not on all occasions thrust her beliefs into the faces of her patients; conversation on

religious topics depends entirely upon them. It is voluntary with them, and not a matter of compulsion. This is certainly a very decided distinction. The example of their lives, their devotion to their office, the Christian graces they manifest, are not seldom the means of calling this forth, as we shall see further on by a comparison of the statistics. The sphere of their usefulness would on any other principle be seriously narrowed, as for example among the Mahometans of Jerusalem and Constantinople and Alexandria, as well as among the mixed congregations throughout Germany, and among the Catholics of France and Italy. The Deaconess as little confines her labors within the bounds of a particular Church as within the geographical limits of any country. Her doctrines are evangelical, but her labors reach to members of every sect. In these respects, and perhaps in others, do the Sisterhoods of Charity and the Order of Deaconesses differ.

Further, the work of the Deaconess must not be confounded with that of the Bible women, whose special work is that of evangelism by the distribution of Bibles and tracts, and conversation on religious topics. Her relation to the Deaconess of the primitive Church we shall bring out in a positive way by an exhibit of the character of her activity. It is not the object of this to be at all controversial; at the same time, we hope that all prejudices against the institution from a supposed correspondence to Roman orders in all particulars, may by this time have been removed. Their objectionable features, that is, those elements to which Protestants object, are eliminated, as we have seen.

The *conditions* of admittance to the Order are very simple. They are: 1. The applicant must not only bear the name of Christian, but show evidence of a sincere love for Christ and a longing to do His service. 2. She must present the written testimony of several persons to her moral character. 3. She must have a sound body and bring the testimony of her physician to this effect. The arduous duties of the Deaconess demand more than an ordinary amount of physical strength and endurance. Many are obliged to relinquish the work for this very reason. 4. She must not be younger than eighteen nor older than forty. Very few exceptions are made to this rule. 5. She must have a familiar acquaintance with the ordinary duties of housekeeping, such as



sewing, cooking and the like. 6. She must have a fair education, and present an intelligible and self-consistent autobiography. 7. The written consent of her parents or guardians. 8. She must agree to stand as a probationer at least for six months, and for three years, if considered necessary by the directors. 9. She must be unengaged and unmarried, though she may be a widow. 10. Consent to perform the office of Deaconess for five years after the expiration of the season of probation. Such a condition is demanded by the fact that the institution at Kaiserswerth affords the training, free of all expense. Should, however, the Deaconess change her mind and decide not to serve this length of time, she has the privilege of abandoning her office, but with the promise to pay into the treasury a certain part of the amount expended in her education. Such are the simple conditions for admittance into the Order of Deaconesses. They are very few, revealing no attempt to limit personal liberty, and yet as comprehensive as we could well imagine them.

And now let us ask ourselves what the character of the work is which the Deaconess undertakes. Deaconesses are divided into two general classes: *First*, DEACONESS-NURSES (Pflege-Diakonissen) and *second*, DEACONESS-TEACHERS (Lehr-Diakonissen).

As the name signifies, the peculiar office of the first class is the treatment of the sick, and includes charitable offices among the poor and services in parishes. Their course of training once completed, they are sent to hospitals in Germany and in other lands, which are under the permanent supervision of Kaiserswerth. In addition they are sometimes, if numbers allow, permitted to nurse in private families for short seasons. The report of 1873 states that in that year fifty-eight (58) hospitals had been thus supplied by Kaiserswerth, with from two to eighteen nurses each. It is the design that at least two Deaconesses should labor together at each place, in order that there may be an interchange of advice and encouragement.

The Deaconesses were very active in the wars which were recently waged on the Continent. In the Schleswig-Holstein contest of 1864, twenty-eight accompanied the armies of Prussia, and attended the wounded and sick in the hospitals and on the battlefields. In the war of 1866, this number was increased to eighty-six. As regards the care of the poor, the report of 1873 informs us that



twenty poor-houses were under the charge of Deaconesses from Kaiserswerth in 1873.

*Secondly*, the general class of Deaconess-Nurses includes also the *Parish-Deaconesses*. Their duties seem in many particulars to correspond to those of the deaconesses of the primitive Church, which were the care of the poor and sick among the female part of the congregation. The Parish-Deaconess co-operates with the pastor, in building up and maintaining Sabbath-schools and sewing schools, in visiting the poor, and instructing them in the principles of cooking and washing. She is, in a word, his female aid-de-camp. That there are many services which a pastor cannot perform for his female parishioners, it is only necessary to mention in order to call to our minds many cases. If it is expected that the pastor's wife should take the responsibility of performing them, experience will show that this seldom does occur. Nor is it reasonable to expect that she, alone and unaided, should both fulfil her duties as wife and mother and perform parish duties besides. It is true that members of congregations as individuals undertake these offices very frequently. At the same time, we all of us have often seen these forces either poorly organized or lying idle for want of organization. The Parish-Deaconess steps in at this point and brings her experience to bear in directing the activity of the women. Her presence, then, is not designed to exclude the services of the female members of the individual congregation. She merely supplements them.

It is in place here to give expression to a thought in which we have indulged in connection with Parish-Deaconesses. Will they not carry with them a wholesome spiritual element into congregations? The pastors in Germany have been, and continue to be, to a large extent rationalists. They use their profession principally as a lever for the support of themselves and their families. The nourishment they impart to the longings of their parishioners is in proportion to their lack of faith in the Christ of the orthodox Christian. Pastoral work is neglected and the congregations go to spiritual ruin. German Switzerland is at this time illustrating these facts by scores of examples. Now what a rock the fidelity of their Christian women would oppose to stem the influences of infidelity and cold preaching! Labors from them in such par-

ishes might be fraught with most happy results. This, of course, is on the supposition that the Deaconess would always stand true to her profession of Christ. Female piety is often very marked, and we feel sure that it could not fail to have brought about much fruit in the long season of the extended and utter religious indifference which has characterized a number of German congregations during the last fifty years or more.

But to pass from possibilities to facts. The labors of this class of workers, so far as they have reached, have received the testimony of universal satisfaction. In 1873 they labored in thirty-six parishes.

The second general class of Deaconesses have received the name of Deaconess-Teachers. They first undergo a thorough training at Kaiserswerth and are then graduated as teachers for infant and industrial schools. The graduates of our Normal Schools correspond to some extent to the Deaconess-Teachers. But Normal Schools resemble the training schools at Kaiserswerth in one fact only. They both educate teachers: but while the one makes as the only condition of the teacher intellectual attainments, the other adds to this those of a moral character and religious experience. The one, as a usual thing, is dependent upon the state: the other is independent of it.

In 1873 Deaconesses of this class were dispersed among seventy different educational institutions.

Their labors are, however, as in the case of the Deaconess-Nurses, not confined within the limits of Germany. They direct schools, or act as subordinate instructors, at Smyrna, Florence, Jerusalem, Bucharest, and other foreign cities. They have been very successful wherever they have gone, and the demand for them far exceeds the supply. This fact is true of both classes of Deaconesses, and leaves the success of the institution beyond the shadow of a doubt. And we cannot be surprised at it. Who does not take comfort in the thought that one's friends are under the treatment of trained and competent Christian nurses, one's children under the discipline of Christian teachers spiritually educated for their work? Any other exhibit would point to a defect either in the constitution or the workings of the institution.

The Order of Deaconesses has now completed the thirty-eighth

year of its existence. We have become acquainted with the history of its origin, we have considered it in its relation to corresponding organizations in the Primitive Church and the Latin Church, and made an estimate of its character; we have studied its constitution and its spheres of activity; let us now glance at the work it has been accomplishing during the period of its history.

At the beginning of 1874, the number of Sisters then living and under the direct supervision of the Kaiserswerth *Mutterhaus* was 547. This includes probationers. They were laboring at one hundred and sixty different institutions; hospitals, orphanages, poor-houses, prisons, infant and industrial schools; and in private families and parishes. Through these channels there were brought under their care forty thousand (40,000) persons. The stations are scattered throughout Germany and extend to distant places in Europe, such as Constantinople, Pesth, Florence and Bucharest. They include further Palestine, where forty-five Deaconesses are laboring, Egypt with nine Deaconesses, and Rochester in our own country with one Deaconess. We cannot pause to give any further results of their work, except to cull from the statistics of the hospitals at Jerusalem and Alexandria. It will be most interesting to hear from those far-off cities. During the year of 1872, six hundred and seventy patients patronized the hospital at Jerusalem. Of this number five hundred and sixteen were Mahometans. The hospital at Alexandria during 1873 accommodated in all four hundred and ninety-seven. A gratifying mark of esteem for the labors of the Deaconesses is manifested in the annual contribution, amounting to 10,000 francs, of that liberal patron of modern material progress, the Khedive. Such in brief is the extent of the influence of the plant which has grown from the little grain sown by Fliedner not half a century ago. These are statistics of work being accomplished by the direct efforts of the graduates of Kaiserswerth.

But has the institution at Kaiserswerth remained the only training school for Deaconesses? In the course of these years it has become the progenitor—*Mutterhaus*, as the Germans say—of many more of the same kind. It is a plant, which has not only been sustaining Christian enterprise: it has been generating seeds which

have fallen in many places, and have in turn become healthy plants. It is Gray who says so beautifully,

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

This truth does, no doubt, illustrate the history of many Christian efforts. But it has not been so with this one. It was not long before the fame of Kaiserswerth was carried beyond the narrow limits of the Rhenish provinces. The desire to which the report often gave rise among good people, was often made to blossom into a new institution for the training of Deaconesses by the indefatigable energy of Fliedner. During his life he saw laid the corner-stones of thirty (30). They were established in quick succession, between 1841 and 1864, at Paris, Strasburg, Dresden, Utrecht, Berlin, Stockholm, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Berne, London, Copenhagen, and other cities. Our own country was not to be left without one. In 1849 Pastor Fliedner brought over several Deaconesses, whom he placed at Pittsburgh, to serve as a nucleus for an institution. The attempt has proved a moderate success, but it has been cramped in enlarging the sphere of its activity by the small number of applicants for the office. Mr. Passavant, the director, has kindly informed us that it is now supplying eight hospitals and orphan asylums with nurses. It has, in direct connection with it, at Pittsburgh, an orphanage.

Up to the time of the death of Fliedner, the thirty institutions had educated and graduated fifteen hundred and ninety deaconesses. The institutions had increased to thirty-four in 1867, and the number of Deaconesses to seventeen hundred.

Let us now for a moment look back and reconsider this history. We see Fliedner alone, with no coadjutor but his wife, beset by poverty, and opposed by the prejudices of the Catholic villagers—we remember Gertrude and the one invalid—and now we hear the name of Kaiserswerth uttered in many parts of the world, and we contemplate the results of its influence, in one form or another, not only in every part of Germany, but in France, and Holland, and Italy, and Switzerland, and Sweden, and Denmark, and Turkey, and far-off in Africa, Asia, and America. We are astounded by the result.

It has not at all been our purpose to discuss the question of

woman's work in the Church. But if this brief sketch of the Order of Deaconesses does, to some extent—perhaps to a large extent—answer it for many minds, it will not surprise us.

The Order of Deaconesses is one of the institutions originating with Fliedner's effort; there is yet one more, and we shall content ourselves with the simple mention of its object. We have reference to the HOUSE OF REFUGE FOR SERVANT GIRLS, founded at Berlin, in 1854. The purpose of this institution has been to afford a temporary home for sick and enfeebled servant girls, and to give instructions in the culinary department and the work of a chambermaid. During the past twenty years it has given lodgings and instruction to over nine thousand women of this class of society. The success of the object may be inferred from the fact that the applications to it for help exceed by five times the capacity of supply. The imperial pair of Germany have been in close sympathy with it, and have contributed in large sums to its support, as they have to the support of all the Kaiserswerth institutions. As in the case of the Order of Deaconesses, this has given birth to similar enterprises in different parts of Germany.

We have now completed our sketch of the Kaiserswerth institutions, and will only add that the amount necessary for their support is within a fraction of 100,000 Prussian dollars yearly. The present management is under the able direction of a son-in-law of Dr. Fliedner, Pastor Disselhoff, and his widow, Mrs. Fliedner. Fliedner somewhere says in one of his works, "I feel that my own life is only a vapor, which lasts but a little while, and then vanishes away." (*Ich fühle das mein eigenes Leben auch nur ein Dampf ist, der eine kleine zeit währet, darnach aber verschwindet er.*)

When we first read the above confession, we felt a slight chill of sadness creep over us. But the feeling of sadness has given place to one of deep admiration; for these words give utterance to the humility of an eminent servant of God. His life was spent unostentatiously, but his influence has been as gladdening on the Church as is always the introduction of a rare and odorous exotic into a garden of flowers.

## ART. IV.—ABSOLUTION.

REV. M. KIEFFER, D. D.

It has often become necessary for those who write from our common Christian stand-point to remind their readers of the necessity and importance of occupying substantially the same ground with themselves, in order that they may apprehend and understand fully the subjects under consideration.

Only those who are conscious that there is a God can be profited by theological lectures or articles on the Divine Being. Only those who are Christians can "comprehend, with all saints, what is the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus."

The clearest and fullest exposition of faith is without profit to him who has no faith. An idea of colors cannot be conveyed to the mind of a man who has never been blessed with the sense of sight. The elevated and elevating science of *Æsthetics* has no meaning for him who has no sense of the beautiful. It is in vain to unfold the principle of morality to him who has not "the moral sense," just as it is in vain to speak of sounds and harmony to one who has no ear to hear. Thus when the preaching of St. Paul was rejected by many in the cultivated city of Corinth, because it had not in it enough of the wisdom of this world, or because it was not sustained by miracles, he defended himself against his learned accusers by simply taking the ground that they were incompetent to decide the question; "for the natural man receiveth not the things which are of the spirit of God." "The world by wisdom knew not God." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*"—[1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.]

From this we infer that rightly to know God and the things of

God, the soul must be in its proper attitude before Him. To become fully conscious of the rich contents of our undoubted Christian faith, we must stand in the faith. We must stand in the UNITY of the faith, since there is but "one faith, one Lord, and one baptism," and "one God and Father of us all."

The various branches of natural science may be studied separately. But no sound philosophical thinker will maintain that a part of nature's kingdom can be properly understood, unless it be studied in its concrete union with the great whole. The partial student, who is content with the part, or imagines that he has all the truth in his particular branch of study deceives himself, and does not even know the truth of his own department. In the eyes of the catholic student of nature he is stultified. He may have numbers, even a majority agreeing with him; that does not help his case. He is stultified nevertheless. So in regard to the articles of our Christian faith, or the facts and doctrines of our holy Christian religion. We may study them separately; but to do so at the expense of their concrete unity, is to introduce anarchy and confusion into the great realm of religious thought.

With such anarchy the Church has been afflicted, and sorely tried, in every period of her history. Errors and heresies, such as the Arian, the Nestorian, the Eutichian, the Sabellian, and the Pelagian, &c., constantly re-appear; and the articles of faith and doctrine once settled over against the ancient heresies, must be re-settled, (as it seems,) in the consciousness of the Church in every succeeding age. Perhaps there has never been a greater confusion of religious ideas than there is at the present time. The cause of all this we believe to be that here named. In the religious thinking of the day the articles of our faith have come to be "*dissecta membra*." In this realm every one seems to be his own king. His own subjective notions are the standard of orthodoxy. "All are right, if only they are sincere." So the word goes in the way of apology! Yet, in the view of the individual every one is wrong except himself. The article of our common faith, which we are now about to take into consideration, namely, the "Forgiveness of Sins," has been made to suffer especially in the way described. Separated from its proper connection with the creed it has lost almost entirely its original and true meaning. Even amongst those



who lay the strongest claim to evangelical orthodoxy, and make great account of the atonement, the sufferings and death of Christ, there is, in many instances, but a vague sense of sin and guilt. The addresses of the people to a throne of grace, are, to say the least, not well ordered; and often, after praying round the world, when the journey is well-nigh ended, we hear the rapid conclusion as follows: "and forgive our sins for Christ's sake, Amen." It is only too evident that the true sense of this article of our "undoubted Christian faith" is to a great extent lost amid the general confusion of religious ideas and subjective notions that characterize our time.

To aid in bringing order out of this confusion, and in awakening the Church so a proper consciousness of sin and guilt, in connection with the true meaning of *absolution*, is our present design.

In the economy of grace we are confronted by two mysteries: viz: "the mystery of iniquity," and "the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." They exist in the world in the form of two kingdoms: "the kingdom of darkness," and "the kingdom of marvelous light," "the kingdom of this world," and "the kingdom of God." These stand opposed, the one to the other; they are distinct communions and have no fellowship, the one with the other, as light has no fellowship with darkness, and as righteousness has no communion with unrighteousness.

They both exist in the world historically: History is the development of human life. This may be either normal or abnormal. "The mystery of iniquity" is the abnormal development of human life from the time when our first parents sinned and fell, until the final consummation of all things, or until this old creation shall have become entirely new. It is as broad and deep as humanity itself. It works in all the deep recesses of man's inner being, it reveals itself in all the forms of his outward activity, and affects with the most awful consequences all the relations by which he is affiliated and joined to the natural world around him; so much so that the very earth is cursed for his sake. The mystery of godliness, "God manifested," and God manifesting himself, "in the flesh," is the *normal* development of human life, the process commencing with the earliest dawn of the supernatural revelation and going forward with the cycles of the ages until humanity shall

have reached its consummation of bliss and glory in the heavenly world. This is the history of Redemption; *Redemption* as afore-told and typified in the Old Testament dispensation, and fulfilled in the New.

By studying closely the relation of this normal development to the abnormal we shall learn that they are cotemporaneous. As soon as the mystery of iniquity begins to work, as soon as sin enters the world, so soon does the idea of redemption commence the process of its actualization. The history of our race does not antedate the history of redemption. "Christ was slain from the foundation of the world." Nor must we suppose that the process of profane history is more rapid than that of sacred history, so that the one can reach its goal before the other. According to the strictest measurement of time and space the idea of redemption is as broad and deep as humanity. No human thought or volition can go beyond it.

Yet this idea, broad and comprehensive as it is, according to its strict meaning, has its limit. It is relative, and its actualization is bounded by man's *need* of redemption.

But in its origin it is divine, it is God's eternal and boundless love. In love He created all things. In love, He made man in His own image. In his primeval state man stood *consciously* in the divine love; yea, in the very love that becomes redemptive (as soon as sin enters) and manifests itself more and more as redeeming power in the world's history. "God is love," and hence it lay in His very nature to manifest Himself in the form of the natural creation. This is the first actual birth from the womb of eternity. It is the child of eternal love. Love is the holy bond that unites all the parts of the creation, whether celestial or terrestrial, in one great organic unity. In the divine love stands the unity of the Godhead—the unity of all the divine perfections and attributes—so in it stands also the concrete unity of all that God has made.

Thus in the creation God is glorified; and just because the creation culminates in the personal creature, and finds in him the conscious medium through which it would declare God's glory and praise; just because man is made in God's image, in righteousness and true holiness, "that he might rightly know God his creator, heartily love Him and glorify and praise Him forever:" *i. e.* just

because in his person are centered all the excellencies of created existence, whilst at the same time he mirrors the perfections and glories of the Divine Being, does sin as soon as he commits it, involve him in the most aggravated guilt and the most awful consequences." Were the creation not a unit, were there no organic union between the personal creature and the impersonal, between the subjective and the objective; were each a separate creation by itself, then certainly the sin of the one could not bring a curse upon the other. And were there no organic unity of the race, were each human individual an entirely distinct and separate creation by himself, though crowded closely together, the sin of the one could not in that case in any way become the sin of the other. Then the sinner might die, because he is a sinner, and the others might all live, because they have not sinned. This were *indeed* an illustration of individualism. But from suppose cases we can gain nothing more than an illustration of hypotheses. The case in hand is real, most awfully and profoundly real. Nature is one, notwithstanding its multiformity, and its endless diversity. The impersonal creature is not without the personal. They are one, vitally united as soul and body. No part exists for itself, nor in itself; but all the parts of the grand organism are animated and held together by one common law. Nor is this the law of independent existence by any means; for we know that relative being must necessarily ground itself in the Absolute. The creation is because God is: it is in *Him* that all things consist.

This idea of the concrete unity of all the parts of the natural creation, in connection with the fact that the whole has the ground of its being in God, and that it is the form of His self manifestation we must ever keep in mind in order to form a correct view of our subject.

We are taught in our Symbol of Faith that to enjoy the Christian comfort we must know "how great our sins and miseries are," how we are to be delivered from them, and how are to express our gratitude to God for such deliverance. We are also told that we may know our sin and misery out of the law of God: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. iii. 20. "I had not known sin but by the law." Rom. vii. 7. Then immediately the question is very properly asked: "What doth the law of God require of us?" "Christ teacheth us that briefly," etc.

Here we are in a plain path ; but in entering upon it many stumble and fall, not from any defect in the Symbol, but because they proceed too rapidly. Without studying the perfect law of God, in its general, or all-comprehensive nature ; without looking properly into this sea of being and existence by which we are apprehended, they proceed at once to the *requirements* of the law. They virtually ignore the Third Question, and at once take up the Fourth. To be "practical," the application of the sermon is made in the absence of the sermon. The special, the particular, is insisted upon, in the absence of the general to which it belongs. The requirement is made, but the deep and comprehensive ground in which it rests is not so much as named. Thus the law of God is resolved into a mere requirement, or precept, or at best a well-defined rule of life.

In the mind of the abstract thinker it is of course a mere abstract rule, standing in no concrete union with either the divine or human life.

Any one can see that according to this view, sin, "the transgression of the law," is comparatively a mere triviality. True, the sinner has been disrespectful to the Great Lawgiver ; he has insulted the High Majesty of heaven ; but what of it ? What injury has been done ? A child has been naughty, a subject has been disobedient. For his good, and for the honor of the parent and king, he should be punished. So God takes the law, that has been violated, into His hand as a rod and chastises the offender, that under the smart he may be brought to grief, to repentance, and the exercise of faith in pardoning mercy. There is mercy in store on account of the sufferings endured by the Son of God upwards of eighteen hundred years ago. The law is of course good as a rod in the hands of the school-master to bring us to Christ. But looking upon it merely in this light, that is, as a means to an end, and not as having its end in itself, the question must force itself upon us : what injury has that thing called sin done which has made such use of the law necessary ? To say that it has brought misery and suffering into our world, is not a satisfactory answer to the question. It is conceded that suffering is not an evil *per se* ; and as for misery, why should that be deplored, since the more deeply we feel it the greater is the happiness that succeeds as soon as we are delivered from it ? If sin and misery have brought the Son of

God into our world, in whom we have complete redemption, even everlasting life and endless happiness, why deplore that sin and misery? If by my own fault I have fallen from the earth into a deep below, and God pities me and takes me up to a more glorious abode in heaven, why should I be sorry for either the fault or the fall?

We intend no caricature. The subject is difficult. We ask these questions just here to show that the usual forensic view of sin and its pardon through Christ fails, in this *abstract* way, to satisfy the demands of truth. By a single step (as the history of modern theology clearly shows), the transition is made from this standpoint to that of the rationalist. In the very nature of the case the apprehension of sin and misery, as the *occasion* of the divine love taking the form of pardoning mercy, suggests the thought that it is an *advantage* and not an evil. So the rationalist believes, so he teaches: "That which thy Bible and the Church call sin, is not an evil, but an element of humanity itself, essential to its complete development, and that which is set forth as the pardon of sin, and man's reconciliation to God through his Son, is the form in which this process of development completes itself in the personal consciousness."

Thus the evangelicalism of our day whilst it has a holy horror of all churchly tendencies, stigmatizing them as ritualistic (as though Christianity could be without its *ritus*), is at once the occasion and the strength of rationalism. The mode adopted to counteract extreme tendencies by the advocates of the opposite extreme, namely, sharp discussion, is a sad proof of itself that there is not a proper sense of "sin and misery." This is too evident from the party strife of our time. All must admit that it does not breathe the spirit of penitent faith. He that misrepresents, all the time, the views that differ from his own, has he learned his sin and misery out of the law of God? Does he who is sticking you with a pin while he is praying at your side really desire the pardon of his sin or of yours?

Does the evangelicalism of our day produce the Christian fruit of repentance unto life? By the fruit the tree is to be judged, and not by the rustling of its leaves. Where do we find the deepest sense of sin and guilt, and the most devout thanks for pardoning mercy?

Do we find them in the confessional? Let the holy life of those who go to the confessional give the proof. We want to see the good fruit. If this great Roman catholic tree, at which we are just now looking, be good, it will bring forth good fruit, but if evil, it will bring forth evil fruit. If Roman catholicism should authenticate itself as the absolute religion by producing in the priesthood and laity the fruits of repentance unto life, then it has gained the victory beyond all controversy. Unprejudiced Protestants, we think, would be willing to be overwhelmed by this kind of argument. But just as little as we can expect to be overcome by such self-authenticating power from that quarter, so little can we expect it from the "evangelical" Protestantism which has come to a knowledge of sin, not by the law of God, but merely (if at all) by an abstract requirement of the law.

That subjective piety, which protests indiscriminately against the objective side of religion, can never, in the nature of the case, authenticate itself as genuine and real. If *it* be the only hope of Protestantism, then the predictions of its failure are already fulfilled. It does not produce a true knowledge of sin; hence it is not truly humble, it is not penitent, it does not bring forth the fruits of holy living. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." If sin then be something entirely different from what it is in the mind of the rationalist, and if the conception of it by our modern unchurchly Evangelicals be inadequate, superficial and empty, how can we truly know our "sin and misery?" This knowledge we are expressly taught, is by the law. But the law as we have seen is something vastly more than a precept, a commandment, or a requirement. In its generality it includes all commands, precepts, and special requirements. These can only be known properly in their concrete connection with it. The law of God is his *will* in its general and special relation to the whole creation and all that is in it. It is as comprehensive as the universe. It may be known by different names as it reveals itself in the different departments of the universal kingdom. Yet it is one, holding all the parts together, as said, in one concrete unity. Even that which is known to us as the natural and supernatural Revela-

tion is only a two-foldness. Not two divine wills are revealed, but only one. Not two Gods have spoken to us, the one in His works, and the other in the form of the Inspired Word: the one only true God has spoken in this two-fold way.

True, the law of nature (*Gesetz*) is something settled and fixed. Its order is established. Nature is not God; the law of its life is distinct from His, yet His will is the supreme law determining and controlling all events, so that nothing comes to pass by chance. This holds in regard to the personal creature, as well as the impersonal.

Man is in a special sense autonomic. Yet he is not independent. He has his being in another, from whose presence he cannot escape. Individuality holds in its generality. Personality, (will and intelligence in their identity) though self-moving, has all the springs of its life and activity in the Absolute Person.

Solemn and sublime thought; personal creatures, angels and men, an innumerable company, (the universe is full of them) living, moving, thinking, breathing, in God, the Absolute Person, who rules supreme, and whose holy will unites all in one holy catholic communion. God's law revealed, and ever revealing itself, in this general concrete form, gives us a knowledge of his personal character. He is holy, just, true, good. Yea, He is personal holiness, justice, truth, goodness, love. So the revelation of His will as law is the revelation of Himself. Surely then it is not the law-knowledge *out of* God that gives the knowledge of sin, but that knowledge in Him; and this knowledge we have in Christ His Son, who is the fulfilment of the law.

This not the place to discuss the possibility of sin (the *posse peccare*), nor its origin. Both are verified by its presence in our world.

The question is: how can we know our sin, so as to be delivered from it? There are words that, when they are allowed to speak for themselves, convey their own ideas much more fully and forcibly than they can be conveyed by definitions. This is the case with the word *sin*. According to its etymology, as given by some (*σίνουα*) it means injury, damage, loss, ruin, depravity, as involving guilt. Sin then is unholiness, injustice, iniquity, badness, hate; just the opposite of God, against whom it is primarily committed.



It is for this reason, we think, that the world's iniquity is spoken of as a mystery. It is the mystery of human life itself in the process of abnormal development. This is general: "All flesh has corrupted its way before God." Man has sinned, so all men have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

The idea of human sin is general, we say, and squares with that of humanity. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." As individual human life, and thought, and action, stand in the general life of the race, so all sins, whether committed in thought, word, or deed, imply the presence of sin. It individualizes itself as does humanity.

Here then we are confronted by a three-fold generality: 1. The all-comprehensive law of God, as identified with His own Being, as made known in nature, and as revealed in the Old and New Testaments.

2. Humanity, individualized in the world's history.

3. Sin, in all the special forms of its power and guilt.

The three present themselves in *one* concrete view. Humanity beholding itself in the light of the divine revelation sees its own sinfulness and depravity. This is what St. Paul means, we think, when he says: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Not the law merely as a moral precept, for in another connection he saith, "He that offends in one point offends in all;" but the law which is the very revelation of God himself. God, as said, is a personal Being, and has a character. He is holy, of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity. It is this knowledge of God that gives us an overwhelming sense of our sin and guilt. The whole history of God's people testifies to the truth here set forth.

When Moses received the law in the form of the ten commandments, it was not this that caused him to fear and tremble, but it was the presence of God, who had called him to an audience with Himself upon Mount Sinai.

It was when realizing this same Divine presence in the Temple that the inspired prophet exclaimed: "O God, I am unclean, and dwell among a people of unclean lips." So generally the pious of all ages when they come into God's presence to worship Him devoutly acknowledge first of all their unworthiness and guilt.

O sinful and guilty man, what hast thou done? God made thee

in His own image, in knowledge, in righteousness, and holiness; but thou hast defaced that image; thou hast shut out the divine light from the inner chambers of thine own being; thou hast thrown off and torn to shreds the spotless robes of righteousness and holiness, and hast taken from Satan (God's enemy), the clothes of an abject slave, and dost wear them as thine own. God breathed into thee the breath of divine life, and made thee a temple for his indwelling that thou mightest commune with Him, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, forever, and he with thee; but thou didst extinguish this life within thee; thou didst turn God out of this, his own temple, and hast consecrated it to the service of Baal. God created the universe as a temple, in which the *Shekinah* is to dwell forever, and placed thee in it as prophet, priest, and king; but thou didst desecrate that temple, and didst turn it into a "den of thieves." God placed thee in the communion of the good, the relative good and the absolute, by baptizing thee as his child; the holy angels were thy brothers, their home your home; but you left that holy communion, the communion of light, of love, and joy; and didst join thyself with a herd of swine, yea, worse, a herd of fallen angels and damned spirits. God made thee the father of a great family; thy sons are as numerous as the stars of the natural heavens, and were designed to shine as brighter stars in a brighter firmament; in them God would actualize the eternal ideal of sonship; but thou by thy sin hast made thyself, and all these, the children and slaves of Satan. The wages of this thy sin is death; death spiritual, temporal, and eternal. This thou hast brought upon thyself and all thy posterity.

Just here we deem it of the utmost importance to guard against all those theological views and teachings which have a tendency to palliate man's sin and guilt.

It is conceived, for instance, that, after God had created man, He left him to himself for some wise purpose, and the enemy taking advantage of this circumstance, succeeded in overcoming him who was too weak to stand alone.

Only in this way, it is thought, can man's sin and fall be accounted for. God saw the danger of His child. He saw the serpent from a distance. He knew all that passed in the way of temptation, yet He did not interpose. "God permitted it."

"The sin and fall of man fulfills a permissive decree." "God permitted the fall of man that He might glorify Himself in human redemption."

This, we are aware, is not intended as a palliation for man's guilt; but it is so in fact. If the view be correct, we can't see that man is so very blameworthy or guilty after all. He has been unfortunate and deplorably miserable for a time; but, as previously intimated, we are unable to see how a consciousness of misery can awaken within us a consciousness of guilt, since it is to be succeeded by a state of happiness and joy.

If God permits a ship to be dashed to pieces so that He may show forth His miraculous power and wisdom in rebuilding it so perfect and strong that it can safely "outride" every storm, then the very misfortune of that ship has certainly been its greatest fortune. There is nothing to deplore.

If God permitted the great temple of our humanity to be destroyed that he might build it up again, making it infinitely more glorious than before, we can't see that any human individual can regret very much that he is that temple. No, there is not the least evidence that God left man to himself a single moment for any purpose whatever. But man, standing in the very bosom of the divine love, in conscious union and communion with the good, so perverted his autonomic power as to identify his will with that of the devil. He sinned against the infinite love in which he was born and in which he consciously lived. By his disobedience, he sinned against God, against nature, and against himself. There is no excuse, no palliation. The guilt of the sin, though committed by a creature in finite form, is of infinite aggravation, because it is committed against infinite goodness and love. God did not will it or permit it in any sense of approval. On the contrary, He strictly forbade it, saying: "Thou shalt *not* eat thereof."

The conception that a secret decree or purpose was fulfilled by man when he violated and transgressed the revealed will of God, is not only wrong in that it brings the Divine Being in conflict with Himself, but it is also an unnecessary expedient resorted to for the purpose of explaining that which is in itself an inexplicable mystery.

Man is a deep mystery to himself in any relation in which he

may be found. And if in his history it should be discovered that by abusing the freedom of will, with which he was endowed, his normal life became abnormal, if here there is a revelation of sin, let the awful mystery be acknowledged in all the stages of its development from its beginning until its work of death is finished. Far away be the thought that God secretly permitted sin that grace might abound.

Where do we stand if we entertain this thought? Let us see. The devil is a person, we admit; let us for a moment personify sin, which man committed by his instigation, and which is his dreadful work. Then Sin and Satan come to us side by side, and say to us: "We as well as you are integral parts of God's great creation. God would glorify himself as Redeemer, as well as Creator and Ruler, and for this purpose He needs us. Our kingdom we have established by God's secret permission. Our works of darkness, of cruelty and death are all necessary to the great end in view. But for us and our work the Son of God would never have become the Son of man; He never would have made an atoning sacrifice on the cross; nor would He have become the resurrection and the life. But for us there would be no redemption, and no heaven of the redeemed."

Shall we believe this double-tongued speech of the Viper? No, God does not need sin in any person, nor in any form for the honor and glory of His name. The very thought seems to us a blasphemy. Get behind me, thou rationalistic Satan. Any one who is accustomed to thinking closely can easily see, for instance, that, if man's sin is in any sense necessary or essential to his being and well-being, there is no possibility of his redemption. Humanity cannot be redeemed from that which is essentially human.

As sin is ungodliness, so it is also an unnaturalness, and consequently, because man is an integral part of nature, it is in the fullest sense of the word an "UNHUMANNESS." Hence its universal condemnation. God is terribly displeased with it in all the forms of its development, and will in no case allow it to go unpunished. As said in the Book of Proverbs, chap. xi, v. 21., "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." See also Romans, chap. i., v. 18. "The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

All nature joins in the condemnation. "Because that which may be known of God, is manifested in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse," vs. 19, 20.

Human nature itself joins in the general sentence of condemnation. "Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." Rom. ii. 15.

In all this is involved necessarily the guilt of the sinner. As said by an able writer: "Every sin doth cause a guilt, and every sinner, by being so, becomes a guilty person; which guilt consisteth in a debt or obligation to suffer a punishment proportionable to the iniquity of the sin. It is the nature of laws in general to be attended with these two, punishments and rewards; the one propounded for the observation of them, the other threatened upon the deviation from them. And although there were no threats or penal denunciations accompanying the laws of God, yet the transgression of them would nevertheless make the person transgressing worthy of, and liable unto, whatsoever punishment can in justice be inflicted for that sin committed." [Pearson.]

In other words the sinner is bound by the holy will of God, which is the law of all created existence, and especially the law of human life and activity, to make good all the injury done by his sins. Even in case he leaves off sinning, this obligation still rests upon him in regard to his past offenses. In case he has committed the sin of theft, or murder, but once in his life-time, yet he is ever after bound to answer for his crime, and to make good the injury done. This obligation is the *peccati reatus*, spoken of so much by the church fathers, and after them by the school-men. Now to understand our subject we must observe the following fact: God ordinarily, that men may not break away from the obligation of his law, vindicates its majesty and sanctity through a *vicegerency*, and that in a two-fold form: that of the State and of the Church, answering all the relations of human life, civil, social, and religious.

The State, as we know, is a power ordained of God, and the civil magistracy is God's ministry. Through her judiciaries, and

other officials, kings, presidents, and governors, the State *authoritatively* declares and pronounces offenders guilty, and punishes them as their crimes deserve. The sentence pronounced in heaven is thus pronounced on earth; that which is bound there is bound here, *i. e.*, God through the State authority, or vicegerency, binds the civil offender over to punishment, and thus the majesty of His law is vindicated, and His honor promoted. In the same sense, only in a higher and holier degree, does the Lord exercise his regal function in the Church, or in his mediatorial kingdom on earth. It is conceded on all sides, yea, even by the most unchurchly and unsacramental sects, that the Church has the divine authority to exercise discipline upon sinful and unworthy members, even to excommunication. Though they may deny in words that the keys placed by the Saviour into the hands of the apostles for the opening and closing of the doors of his kingdom, were handed over to their successors in the ministerial office, and by these again to theirs, down to the present time, yet in practice they deny their own words, in this, that they exercise the authority symbolized by those very keys. What means the list of the names of excommunicated members from the various Christian denominations (churchly and unchurchly), as reported year after year? Practice and words are very different things, and the argument of the former is always stronger than that of the latter. Thou that art opposing us for holding certain views in regard to church authority dost teach the same thing.

To decide on this question it is not at all necessary to discuss the subject of an apostolical succession. All the ministers of the different churches, without asking the question whether they stand in the line of such succession, declare with one voice that the preaching of the Gospel of Christ is to them that believe not "a savor of death unto death." "He that believeth not is condemned already." "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." This is God's word and they declare it by God's authority, as the ambassadors of Christ.

This is sufficient for our purpose. We need not detain here to decide the question how the minister receives and holds this authority; whether immediately by an internal spiritual call from heaven, or

by such call as mediated and confirmed through the church organization. The result is the same. The binding power which Christ gave to the Apostles is in force in the Church to the present day. The fact is established, and our faith in it is confirmed by the universal practice of churches of every name. The following example some years ago came under our own personal observation : An unworthy member was excommunicated from the Methodist church. The sentence of excommunication was solemnly read from the pulpit with the consent of the whole congregation. Upon meeting the minister subsequently, the excommunicated man said to him : "No human authority can shut me out of heaven, I care not for the sentence pronounced upon me." To whom the minister replied : "It is by God's authority, and by a divine sentence, the people of God acquiescing in it, that you are excluded from the communion of the church, and unless you repent of your sin and show the fruits of sincere repentance by a life of faith, you will be lost for ever as certainly as God lives." Will any one say that this binding on earth what God binds in heaven is priestly arrogance? None will say so, except, as in the case here alluded to, they have no faith at all of the divine in the human.

But it is a remarkable fact that whilst within the limits of Christendom it is almost universally conceded that the Church has power to bind authoritatively on earth what is bound in heaven, as soon as we claim for her a corresponding *absolving* power we are obliged to encounter strong opposition and prejudice. This is owing as we well know to the awful abuse of this power : priests absolving when God does not absolve, men giving and selling indulgences to sin, from motives of gain and power. But in our zealous protest against all the abominations of the papal confessional and other errors and abuses, we must remember that it is our duty to disengage the underlying truth from the errors and abuses that ground themselves upon it. The very presence of the errors and abuses in this case show that there is such truth underlying them. And the question for us to solve is whether the true idea of forgiveness of sins demands the presence and exercise of such absolving power in the church.

In regard to the sacred record of the objective fact of the atonement there is no dispute. "Almost all things by the Law were



purged with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). This was the type of Christ's suffering and sacrificial death, who "once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.) "This man offered one sacrifice for sins." (Heb. xi. 12). "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all." (Isa. liii. 5, 6.) "He who knew no sin hath become sin for us:" i. e. a sin-offering. "He hath become the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." "In whom we have redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Thus we believe, according to these and many other scriptures of the same import, as we have been taught from our earliest youth, concerning the forgiveness of sins: "That God, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, neither my corrupt nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long, but will graciously impute to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may never be condemned before the tribunal of God."

This article of our faith implies necessarily belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and just as necessarily faith in the Holy Catholic Church, and the communion of saints. "For many ages," we are informed by the best authority, "it immediately followed the belief in the Holy Church, and was, therefore, added immediately after it, to show that the remission of sins was to be obtained in the Church of Christ." "For being the creed was at first made to be used as a confession of such as were to be baptized, declaring their faith in the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, in whose name baptism was administered; they propounded unto them the Holy Church, into which by baptism they were to be admitted, and the FORGIVENESS OF SINS, which by the same baptism was to be obtained; and therefore in some creeds it was particularly expressed: "*I believe one baptism for the forgiveness of*

sins." The Constantinopolitan creed: "We believe in one baptism for the remission of sins." The lesser and larger creeds of Epiphanius: "We believe one baptism for the remission of sins," and "We believe one holy apostolical church, and one baptism of repentance."

Now the necessity and importance of the vital union of the articles of our faith, and especially this article of the forgiveness of sins, with that of the Church (the "communion of the saints," being regarded as the form of this vital union), arises from the very nature of the "full satisfaction" which Christ has made for our sins.

This word "satisfaction" is much more scholastic than it is scriptural; but as it has become canonized, we shall not discard its use. Rightly interpreted, it means that God in his Son, by the Holy Ghost, has made (*facio*), or done sufficient (*satis*), or enough for man's deliverance from sin, his complete restoration and the full actualization of his proper ideal.

Various and many figures of speech have been used by the schools to set forth this idea. Sin has been conceived to be a debt, which the sinner is unable to pay; and this debt Christ has fully liquidated: "Ye are bought with a price!" "A sufficient price." God is angry with the wicked: "His wrath is revealed from heaven" against them; but by the one sacrifice of Christ's life the divine wrath is *fully* appeased, and God is reconciled to the sinner. The sinner is bound to suffer the penalty of the law; "he is bound to suffer extreme, that is, everlasting punishment." This punishment Christ has satisfactorily suffered in the sinner's stead.

All these forms of expression, doubtless, convey more or less truth. Yet, it seems to us, they do not go to the root of the matter. The redemption wrought out for the children of men by the Son of God, or the "full satisfaction" made for sin, must necessarily be made in and by the same human nature which hath sinned. [See Heid. Cat., Q. 16.] The penalty of the law is not only to be suffered, the debt of sin paid, and the flame of divine wrath quenched by divine blood, but humanity must fulfil that law, as Christ hath said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of

the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven."

Accordingly the "satisfaction" made by Christ is the satisfaction made by humanity, or by "the same human nature which hath sinned." To be complete it must make good all the injury done by man's disobedience; it must square exactly with the idea of redemption (a more scriptural word), which places man where he stood before his fall, and so sanctifies him in his person, and in all his relations (to God and to nature), as to raise him to the dignity and glory for which he was designed in his creation. Beyond this we cannot force this idea, and to be complete it cannot come short of this high and holy end. This is the great atonement, the blessed reconciliation. But as we have seen and know, sin exists in the world historically, in the form of a communion of evil, or a kingdom of darkness. Hence man is represented as an alien, *i. e.*, one who, by wicked works, hath left or gone out of the kingdom of God, and taken up his abode in a foreign dominion. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." Now for the very reason that sin is the abnormal development of humanity, or because it is historical, Christianity, the religion of redemption, must necessarily be historical also. Only in such view can we rely upon it as real. It is the only real normal development of humanity. In other words it is Christ's real life unfolding itself historically in the form of His mediatorial kingdom, or in the form of His church, which is His body. The sacred Scriptures are full of this thought: "The kingdom of God;" "The kingdom of heaven on earth;" "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" "Thy kingdom come." Faith in the Triune God involves necessarily, therefore, faith in His Church as the form in which the powers of His kingdom are historically revealed, and just as necessarily does this again involve faith in "the communion of saints," and "the forgiveness of sins."

All this is fully implied in the solemn commission given by the Great Head of the Church to the apostles: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even

unto the end of the world. Amen." "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." We need not stop here to decide the question whether Christ delegated the power to the apostles to remit and to retain sins in virtue of their organic union with the Church, and whether they exercised this authority as office-bearers of the Church, or whether He delegated it to them in virtue of their personal relation to Him. In either view the idea of forgiveness comes to a general actualization in the Christian communion. Hence the prayer: "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us." "The power holds in the church." The Christian ministry is not without the Church, as this again does not exercise its functions without its office-bearers. Here an instance occurs to us in which an apostle did absolve. "To whom ye forgive anything," saith St. Paul, "I forgive also, for to whom I forgive anything for your sakes, forgive I it in the person of Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 10.) In this reference is had to the restoration of an excommunicated member of the Church. So we find that the same principle holds in the admission of penitent believers to church membership by the sacrament of baptism. Their regeneration is "by water and the Spirit," (John iii. 5,) and this their new birth is their entrance into the kingdom of God.

"Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of your sins." "Be baptized." By whom? By what authority? And for what end? Shall we answer: "By the Spirit, according to the authority of God's word, as interpreted by the penitent himself, to the end that he may receive the assurance that his sins are forgiven." Sad perversion and fatal delusion! There can be but one true answer to these brief questions. If Christ has given the commission to baptize, then, without doubt, we must look to those thus commissioned for the true baptism; and receiving the sacrament from them, we have the true sign and seal (of God's Spirit) of the grace of regeneration, and with this the forgiveness of our sins. Thus in the "Liturgy of the Reformed Church," a penitent believer having professed our undoubted Christian faith, in which he desires to be baptized (the creed), is solemnly asked in the pres-

ence of God and the congregation: "Do you sincerely desire to be baptized in this faith, and thus receive of God the seal of your adoption?" And then in the prayer: "We give thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased thee to give this brother grace to know the greatness of his sins and misery, and to cast himself in true repentance and faith upon Jesus Christ as his only Saviour, to confess Him before men, and to *receive in Holy Baptism the sign and seal of the remission of his sins*, and of his adoption as a child of God." [Notice especially, this is not from the "Order of Worship," but from the "Liturgy of the Reformed Church."]

We have not quoted from this source to revive old differences of opinion in regard to sacramental grace; the particular point is the binding and the absolving power of the Church. According to the formula from which we have taken the above extracts, a person who is not baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is not a member of the Church; he has no right to her communion. He is authoritatively received (*einverleibt*) into the Church by baptism, i. e.: he is received by a minister of the Gospel who is divinely commissioned and ordained to preach the word and administer the sacraments. The baptism, as we see from this formula, though administered by human hands, and its meaning spoken by human lips, is of God; hence the question: "Do you desire to be baptized in this faith, and thus receive of God the seal of your adoption?" or as in the prayer, "the sign and seal of the remission of sins."

Whatever may be our views then, in regard to sacramental grace, by almost universal consent baptism is the boundary line between proto-Adamic humanity and deuterio-Adamic humanity, or the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of grace. It is not an imaginary line, nor is it one that has been arbitrarily drawn by the hand of man. It is like a river rather, that naturally divides one kingdom from another. In its waters we *must* be washed, or (to speak in the figure of the Apostle) in its laver we must be regenerated, in order to enter God's kingdom.

If any one should object to this, on the ground, as our catechism teaches, that the kingdom of heaven is opened by the preaching of the Gospel, we need only reply that regeneration by water and the

spirit is also Gospel. By no setting up of one part in opposition to the other can its power and authority be weakened. The sacrament of baptism is the first Gospel form of absolution. Every Gospel sermon preached by the ambassador of Christ is an authoritative declaration of pardon to those who repent and believe; it is to them an opening of the doors of the kingdom; but their subjective faith cannot in the nature of the case give them the assurance that their sins are forgiven until they are vitally united to Christ in regeneration. The pardon of sin, "the imputation of Christ's righteousness," are blessings enjoyed only by those who are in Christ. No mere outward or forensic justification is real. There must be a vital union, commencing in the new birth. Of this baptism is the holy visible sign and seal, confirming to the worthy recipient the preaching of the Gospel, and giving him "the comforting assurance that his sins are forgiven and that he is a child of God." It is the very form in which the "Son of Man," says: "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."

Here the "Scribes and Pharisees begin to reason, saying, who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering, said unto them: What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier to say: Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say: rise up and walk. But that ye may know that the Son of man has power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house." (Luke v. 21, 24.) As said by an English divine, a minister of wonderful unction and power, "There are scribes of all ages—Romish scribes, who distinguish between venial and mortal sin, and apportion to each its appointed penance and absolution. There are Protestant scribes, who have no idea of God but as an incensed judge, and prescribe certain methods of appeasing Him—a certain price—in consideration of which He is willing to sell forgiveness; men who accurately draw the distinction between different kinds of faith. . . . Men who make intelligible distinction between the work that *may* and the work that *may not* be done on the Sabbath day; who send you into a perilous consideration of the workings of your own feelings and the examination of your spiritual experiences, to ascertain whether you have the feelings

which give you a right to call God a Father. They hate the Romish Scribe as much as the Jew hated the Samaritan and called him heretic. But in their way they are true to the spirit of the scribe. . . . . They are as zealous as Scribes and Pharisees ever were for negatives; but in the mean time human nature, oppressed and overborne, gasping for breath, demands something real and living." [Robertson.]

"Is it any wonder if men and women, in the midst of negations, cry, ye warn me from the error, but who will guide me into truth? I want guidance. I am sinful, full of evil! I want forgiveness! Absolve me; tell me that I am pardoned; help me to believe it." It is not sufficient that Christ has objectively wrought out a complete redemption answering fully to man's need of the same. There must needs be a synthetic development also of the objective reality in the personal consciousness. Here as elsewhere the general is individualized. As the idea of humanity is actualized in history; *i. e.*: in the way of individual births, and the development of individual lives and characteristics, so this same human nature, as it has become in the strictest and fullest sense of the word *duetero-Adamic* in the person of the incarnate Lord, individualizes itself also in the way of *regeneration*, and of personal growth in grace. This is just what we mean when we say that Christianity is historical. Like every other life process, it must necessarily produce from itself. The idea that a person may become a Christian, or be born as a child of God, apart from Christianity, present as a historical reality in the form of the Church, is just as absurd as to suppose that human beings are the children of the sun and moon. *Zion* is the birth-place of the redeemed. "Of her it shall be said, this and that man was born in her. . . . . The Lord shall count when He writeth up the people that this man was born there." "Her sons and daughters are born unto her as the dew from the womb of the morning." But as Christ is both the life and the light, so His life in us unfolds itself in the way of light. This, from the instant of birth, shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The objective fact of Christianity, God's reconciliation to us in His Son, thus becomes a fact of consciousness. It is an inward, experimental realization. "Old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." But the



case demands that this internal realization be authoritatively declared that it may give its comforting assurance, just as said by the author quoted. For example, a young gentleman and lady are truly in love with each other, and are resolved to unite in the joys and fortunes of the married life: but that does not make them husband and wife. This sacred relation is both effected and solemnized by the properly authorized minister at the hymenial altar. *He marries them.*

The naturalization of foreigners has also been used as an illustration. Thus, under the sound of the Gospel, persons hear of Christ, of salvation, and of the kingdom of grace; and a feeling of need and a desire to be saved are awakened within them; they are blessed with the preventient grace of repentance and faith, but this cannot give them the comforting assurance of their acceptance until they are really baptized into Christ's mystical body, and until they hear from His sacred lips, "Thy faith has saved thee," "thy sins are forgiven: be of good cheer." This divine word, thus spoken, can alone satisfy this most central need of our religious nature.

In this view absolution is in its nature, and in effect, the divine reconciliation, in Christ, actualized in the personal consciousness of the penitent believer; so that he in turn is reconciled to God, to nature, and to himself. He is now where he would have been if he "never had had or known any sin," a child of God, an heir of heaven. It might seem, as was taught by Novatianus, a Roman presbyter, and by Novatus, a bishop of Africa, that such absolution in the way of regeneration by water and the Spirit, frees entirely from sin for all time to come; or if any one commits a sin after his baptism, for him there is no remission.

But the word of God, and the history of Christians of all ages, teach beyond all controversy, that justification is not yet complete sanctification. Sin still inheres. The new man is born, but the old man is not yet crucified. "While we are in this life encompassed with flesh, while the allurements of the world, while the stratagems of Satan, while the infirmities and corruptions of our nature betray us to the transgression of the law of God, we are always subject to offend (from whence, whosoever saith he hath no sin is a liar, contradicting himself, and contracting iniquity by pretending innocency); and so long as we can offend, so long we

may apply ourselves unto God by repentance, and be renewed by His grace and pardoned by His mercy." The truth of this is confirmed by the Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us." This prayer is for those who can call God, "Our Father."

Hence it follows that the absolving power is needed, not only by penitents in entering the kingdom of grace in the way of regeneration, but also by all Christians, from the time of their spiritual birth until they are entirely freed from the body of sin and death. "Absolve me, tell me that I am pardoned, help me to believe it," is the earnest cry of *Christian* men and *Christian* women. The Church, the spiritual mother of the faithful, has in all ages exercised the absolving power. Not merely the churches of Rome and of England have done so: but the Christian denominations do so even, who think it is blasphemy to say that sin can be forgiven except by God only. True, they have in their order of worship no forms of absolution. You hear from them no formal declarations of pardon. They would not be like the Episcopalians in that respect, or like the Lutherans, or even like the Reformed. But they do the very same thing in their own informal way. By their declarations from the pulpit, in the class-meeting, at the anxious bench, and in private interviews, they give the assurance to penitents that they are pardoned. All in fact claim in their way to satisfy this central need of human nature; *i. e.*: in their way they speak of God's love in Christ, and His power and willingness to save; and on the authority of their commission they say to the sincere penitent: "This salvation is yours." How interesting it is to notice in this regard the churchliness of the unchurchly! A man the other week, "illuminated by the Spirit," and fully convinced that all the churches are wrong, offered to me personally the only true baptism and the true absolution, declaring that without these I would be lost with all the rest. The man is not crazy, either. He is just as sane and consistent as the swarming sects who have made him what he is.

The true churchly absolution is not only the constant reassurance of the forgiveness of sins as first realized in regeneration; but in addition to this it is the repetition to the penitent believer, upon

every shortcoming and sin, of the words of the Son of man : "Thy sins are forgiven thee : be of good cheer."

The thought has been suggested that for all purposes of practical piety we have this declaration repeated sufficiently often in the holy communion ; and that it need not be repeated on every Lord's day. Since the communion grace is the baptismal grace in the process of development, it appears to us that the suggestion has great force. But if we acknowledge its force, as we do, we are under the necessity of asserting, and we do it most firmly, that for the development of the Christian life we do not commune sufficiently often. Every Lord's day multitudes of God's people go up to His house to worship Him under a deep sense of their "unworthiness and guilt," and we agree that they need something more than absolution ; they need also that flesh and blood that will nourish them unto eternal life. It is a question, in our mind, whether the declaration of pardon is not out of place except in connection with the communion service.

They should be united, however, not by less frequent declarations of pardon, but by more frequent communions. If we need the one every Lord's day, who will say that we do not need the other ? True, the whole Christian life is a communion ; but as we have seen, it is also an absolution. The more the new man within us is quickened and strengthened, the more our nature is freed from the power of the old man. Whilst, however, this is our opinion and honest conviction, it is easy for us to acquiesce in the present custom of pronouncing the declaration of pardon on occasions of ordinary worship, on the principle that a part may stand for the whole. In prayer and praise, and in hearing God's holy word, we also commune. So in communing we pray, and praise, and hear. It is always edifying to comprehend the general in the particular, and the special in the general. And no one who apprehends by faith the supernatural in the natural, and the divine in the human, in the person of the Son of man, can receive from His holy lips a more comforting word than this : "Thy sins are forgiven thee." In the way here named, we in this single sentence have the assurance that God is reconciled, nature's frown is turned into a smile, and human nature, having satisfied for its sins, is certain of its own ideal.

Should any one doubt the goodness and wisdom of God in making His Son "Head over all things," and in ordaining the Church as the form of his mediatorial kingdom on earth, let him but know the nature of his own need of pardon, and he will find that his inward longing for deliverance can be satisfied in no other way. He can know nothing of the divine except through the human. It is impossible for him to love God whom he hath not seen, except by loving his brother whom he hath seen [John]. The fact that the Son of man has power on earth to forgive sins must, in the nature of the case, be believed in order to apprehend the truth that God alone can forgive sins. And finally, no one can find Christ as the great Absolver, except by the Spirit, who reveals Him unto us. But the sphere of the Spirit's saving activity, as we have seen, is the Church. Hence when Christ says, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," the Spirit and the Bride also say, "Come." Here is the order of the revelation: God, the Son of God (the Son of Man), the Spirit, the Church (the Bride). But in the synthetic development the order of apprehension is reversed. We are apprehended first of all by the mystery of Christianity in the form of the Church. Then, apprehending that by which we are apprehended, we come to a consciousness of our saving relation to the Triune God.

Thus, when the Church gives to those who "truly repent of their sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, with full purpose of new obedience, the comforting assurance that their sins are forgiven in heaven," it is most natural to receive the comfort, and most unnatural to reject it.

It is conceded that when a man sins against his brother, or against nature, he sins against God. When forgiveness comes, why then should it not come from God, through the natural and the human? This is the very order of the Gospel: God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and Christ, by the Spirit, in humanity, or in His mystical body, saying in an audible human voice to every living member thereof: "Thy sins are pardoned; God is reconciled to thee; thou art his child, and an heir of heaven."

ART. V.—THE LATE UNION MOVEMENT OF THE  
TWO REFORMED CHURCHES.

REV. FRANKLIN K. LEVAN, A. M., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, convened in Cincinnati, Ohio, in November, 1872, passed the following action :

The committee to whom were referred the several documents relating to a closer union with the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America, together with the formal request of the delegate from the General Synod of that body, asking for an expression of the views of this Synod on this subject, would report :

That this question has been before the mind of the Church for several years, and thoroughly discussed in all its bearings, and the conclusions reached have found utterance in the action of several Church Courts. The General Synod at Philadelphia, in 1869, had already said that a closer union between the two bodies, so intimately related in doctrine, cultus and name, would be both natural and desirable, so soon as the consummation could be reached with the cordial consent of both parties. It is believed that the action of our Church Courts is not only in harmony with the common feeling of Protestant Christendom regarding the necessity for union in the body of Christ, but it is further held that it is expressive of the sincere desire of the Church which the General Synod represents ; that it would be a matter of rejoicing throughout its congregations to be brought into the closest relations for which the providence of the great Head of the Church may prepare the way. The union of these two members of the Reformed Church would realize the accomplishment of a hope long cherished. Under this view, your Committee propose the following as the action of this General Synod :

*Resolved*, That this General Synod is in full accord with the prevailing sentiment in the Church as it regards the desirableness of Christian unity, and looks forward with pleasure to a union with the Reformed Church in America, that may be accomplished on a basis satisfactory to both Churches. Believing the time to be at hand when negotiations looking to this end should be initiated, it is resolved, by the General Synod, to appoint a committee of three

from each of the five Synods comprising the General Synod, who shall confer with a like committee of the Reformed Church in America, on the proposed union between that Church and our own, and report the results of their conference to the General Synod at its next meeting.

After the adoption of the report this other resolution was added :

*Resolved*, That all the Synods represented in this General Synod, at the ensuing annual meetings, appoint the committees named in the report of the Committee on the Question of Union with the Reformed Church in America.

In accordance with the request of the last resolution, the several District Synods appointed three members to the general committee on the part of the Church. The Reformed Church in America had meanwhile also appointed a committee on the proposed union of the two Reformed Churches. After a long delay, the respective chairmen agreed upon Wednesday morning, November 18th, 1874, as the time, and the First Reformed Church, Race street, Philadelphia, as the place for holding the sessions of the two general committees.

The representation from the Reformed Church in the United States was full, with the exception of one member. Those present were :

*Synod in the United States*.—Rev. Dr. E. V. Gerhart, Rev. Dr. J. H. A. Bomberger, and Elder Levi Fluck.

*The Ohio Synod*.—Rev. Dr. I. H. Reiter, Rev. Dr. Samuel Mease, and Rev. Dr. G. W. Williard.

*The Northwestern Synod*.—Rev. Dr. H. J. Ruetenik, and Rev. S. N. L. Kessler.

*The Pittsburgh Synod*.—Rev. Dr. G. B. Russell, Rev. J. I. Swander, and Rev. Franklin K. Levan.

*The Synod of the Potomac*.—Rev. Dr. J. O. Miller, Rev. E. R. Eschbach, and Elder Israel Laucks.

Of a committee of eighteen on the part of the Reformed Church in America, the following members were present :

Rev. Dr. H. D. Ganse, Rev. Dr. A. B. Van Zandt, Rev. Dr. Philip Peltz, Rev. Dr. W. R. Gordon, Rev. Dr. W. J. R. Taylor, Rev. Dr. P. D. Van Cleef, Rev. Dr. E. I. Corwin, and Elders Jonathan Sturgis and R. H. Pruyn.

On Tuesday evening previous, Nov. 17, the committee of the

German Church met in the Race street church for preliminary organization and consultation. The Rev. Dr E. V. Gerhart was elected chairman, and the Rev. Dr. I. H. Reiter, secretary. The roll was called and almost the entire committee found present. The chairman stated the object of the meeting, and had the action of the General Synod on the subject of union with the Dutch Church (already quoted) read. A very free and interesting interchange of opinion was had. It was felt, and repeatedly stated, that the sentiment of the Church on the subject should be given full expression and force in our consultation, and that the personal views of individual members of the committee should either be held in abeyance or be allowed as of simply secondary importance. In this way, as every section was represented, a comparatively clear and complete understanding was reached.

Preliminary to the discussion of particulars, was the question, *Is the Reformed Church in the United States favorable to a union with the Reformed Church in America, and is it disposed to enter upon the work of consummating it on a basis just to both bodies?*

As reasons for an affirmative answer to the question in this broad form we had :

The highly favorable action, unanimously taken, of the General Synod at Cincinnati.

The ready election of members of our committee by the several Synods.

The singularly concurrent testimony from all parts of the Church, expressed in the committee.

Obviously the conclusion reached could only be to enter the joint committee, on the next day, with the intent of going a long way, on our side, toward bringing about the union of the two churches. No formal resolution was offered, or vote taken. The general sense was abundantly apparent without that. It may be added, that there was even some enthusiasm cropping out. Not a jarring word against union was said; and all favorable facts found full response.

*Which of the two Churches originated the present movement for their union? Which took the initiatory official steps?* The question came to claim attention in this wise. While the committee was engaged in the act of organizing itself, the Rev. Dr. Bom-



berger remarked that it might be best to place a Western man, say Rev. Dr. Williard or Rev. Dr. Reiter, into the chair, inasmuch as this movement for union had had its origin in that part of our Church, and prominent men from that section were, therefore, likely to be better acquainted with its status and bearings than the brethren from elsewhere. Later in the evening, the writer of this article called attention to the remark, in so far as it implied that the present union movement had its official beginning in the Reformed Church in the United States. He pressed two points:

1. That it was of prime account for the committee to make it clear to itself as to which of the two denominations took the initiative. If the German Church had first overtured the Dutch Church, then it was proper that we of the German Church should approach our Dutch brethren with the offer of liberal terms of union; and in that case also, our responsibility in declining what might seem right and just terms, should we do so, would be largely increased: while, on the other hand, if the Reformed Dutch Church had made the first official overtures, then we ought to look to their committee for the offer of the like terms, and leave with it the greater responsibility in furthering or defeating the movement.

2. That the Reformed Church in America, and not the Reformed Church in the United States, had, in fact, taken the first official steps in the present effort toward union on the part of the two bodies. The following proofs, held to be conclusive on this point, were referred to. We shall insert them in full here, since many of our readers are probably not as familiar with them as the members of the committee were.

- a. First, in the order of time, comes the action taken by the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church in a session at Albany, New York, May, 1871. It reads as follows:

"WHEREAS, The corresponding delegate from the Synod of Ohio, of the Reformed Church of the United States, has urgently presented the importance and value of organization between the Reformed Church in America and that Synod;\* therefore,

---

\*The delegate from our District Synod of Ohio, referred to in the foregoing preamble, was the Rev. Dr. I. H. Reiter. He had no instructions to inaugurate measures for a formal union, either on the part of his Synod or his Church, with the venerable body to which he was delegated. When taking leave, he made a fraternal address, and referred, as has been the custom for years past, to the

"*Resolved*, That this Synod is ever ready to receive to it all those Churches which embrace the blessed faith of the Reformation as expressed in our standards.

"*Resolved*, That the Rev. Philip Peltz be appointed, in connection with our delegate to the Synod of Ohio, to visit that Synod at its next annual session, to state the aspects of the subject of union which strike this Synod, and receive any communication which our brethren may choose to present to us.

"*Resolved*, That our hearts likewise turn warmly toward our brethren of the Reformed faith in the Classis of North Carolina: that we rejoice that the difficulties which prevented our following the desires of our hearts when their proposals were made in 1855 have been removed.\*

"*Resolved*, That the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions, Rev. H. D. Ganse, and Elder S. B. Schieffelin be a committee to present the subject of union to our brethren in the Classis of North Carolina, by corresponding with them or visiting them."

Notice was naturally taken of this third resolution by the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States at its annual meeting in Pottstown, Pa., October, 1871. The following action was passed:

In view of the fact, that the Classis of North Carolina is an integral part of this Synod, and at no time has been recognized as occupying an independent position, your committee regards the action under consideration, as a manifestation of discourtesy toward this Synod, and a course which, if generally pursued, must eventuate in endless confusion and absolute disintegration of ecclesiastical organization. Inasmuch, however, as the accredited representative (Rev. William H. Ten Eyck, D. D.) of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, assured this body, that the ac-

---

intimate relationship of the two Reformed Churches, and the importance of a closer union between them. This version, in substance, of his mission and action in the case, Dr. Reiter explicitly corroborated in the committee. Officially he did do, and could do, nothing more.

\*The reference is to action taken by the Classis of North Carolina (then belonging to the Old Eastern Synod, now to the Synod of the Potomac) of the Reformed Church in the United States. The "proposals made in 1855" were the work of a few restless spirits among the ministry of that venerable Classis, who, however, have since then bethought themselves of better ways. As to the "difficulties" which prevented the Dutch brethren from following the desires of their hearts, they were at least twofold. Those impliedly referred to were the existence of slavery in North Carolina in 1855, and the holding of slaves by some of the Reformed members there. A still more formidable difficulty, (not implied in the resolution, for it was not removed,) lay in the unflinching loyalty of the great mass of the Reformed membership, and a number of its ministry in North Carolina, to the Reformed Church of their forefathers.

tion complained of was taken without proper understanding of the relation subsisting between the Classis of North Carolina and this Synod, and utterly disavowed any predatory intentions on the part of the Synod he represented, declaring that the error committed was an "error of the head and not of the heart," your committee believes, that no special action is called for at this time.

b. The second official step was taken by the Ohio Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, in session at Canton, Ohio, May, 1872. We quote from the published minutes, pp. 16 and 17:

On the morning of the third day of the sessions, the Rev. Edward P. Livingston, delegate from the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, appeared in Synod, and having presented his credentials, took his seat as a corresponding member. He subsequently addressed the Synod in an appropriate and fraternal manner. His address was cordially and properly responded to by the President.

In connection with the delegate, the Rev. Philip Peltz, D. D. appeared as a commissioner from that body to this Synod, and after presenting his credentials, and laying on the table of Synod a copy of the minutes of the body he represented, stated in a written address "the aspects of the subject of union which strike their Synod."

Thereupon, on motion, it was

*Resolved*, That a committee of one Minister and one Elder from each Classis represented be appointed, to whom the whole subject of union between our Church and the Reformed Church in America, together with all documents pertaining thereto, be referred.

The committee consists of Revs. S. Mease, C. W. Hoyman, Dr. S. B. Leiter, Dr. G. W. Willard, Dr. J. G. Zahner, H. Wilson, C. Cort, G. M. Albright, and Elders B. Kubus, P. H. King, L. Keller, Dr. C. J. Geiger, F. Bolender and J. Greenameier.

This committee subsequently submitted the following report, which was received, amended, and adopted:

The committee to whom was referred the subject of union between the Reformed Church in America and the Reformed Church in the United States, submit the following report:

That the Synod has heard with pleasure the Rev. Philip Peltz, D. D., who was appointed by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, held at Albany, N. Y., in June, 1871, a special commissioner, in connection with its delegate, the Rev. Edward P. Livingston, to state to this body the aspect of union as it presented itself to their Synod. Having heard the commissioner, we would say in return, that we regard the union of these two branches of the Church as most important for our common Reformed faith as

maintained in our venerable symbol, the Heidelberg Catechism, and that we are ready to co-operate in any and all measures calculated to secure this desirable end, which we believe to be in conformity with the prayer of the great Head of the Church, the spirit of our holy religion, and the wish of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

The Synod is also entirely satisfied with the Christian spirit and sincerity of our brethren of the Reformed Church in America touching the movement, especially since it is assured by the worthy commissioner that the Synod of Albany had no design to ignore or show disrespect to any Judicatory of our Church, and that the action assumed the shape it did because they were not able at the time to ascertain the exact relation of our District Synods to the General Synod, as our delegate had left before the action was taken. That the movement did not start with the General Synod, is no just reason why it should not be fairly considered in all its aspects, and meet with a hearty co-operation for a satisfactory termination.

Being thus relieved of the difficulties which some supposed to exist at first, and seeing how the Lord seems to be moving the different portions of the Church to seek a closer union, it is believed that the present movement is under His direction, and should be cordially seconded; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the subject of union, as presented by our brethren of the Reformed Church in America, be referred to our General Synod for its consideration at its approaching meeting at Cincinnati, Ohio.

*Resolved*, That the delegate from this Synod to the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America be instructed to lay this action before that body with proper explanations, and request the appointment of a commissioner to our General Synod, with the view of furthering the object of union.

*Resolved*, That the union here contemplated meets with the cordial favor and approval of this Synod, and that it earnestly requests the General Synod to adopt such measures as will be calculated to effect it as early as possible, upon such a basis as will be just and honorable to all concerned.

*Resolved*, That we request the North-western Synod to consider the question of union between the two Churches, and that if it meet their favor, they unite with us in overturing our General Synod to this end.

c. Then, in the third place, came the action (quoted at the beginning of this article) of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, in session at Cincinnati, O., November, 1872. Though having in no sense originated this union move-

ment, it fell in heartily with it, and took efficient measures to further it.

*First Session of the Joint Committee.*

On Wednesday morning the committees of the two churches met at the place and hour appointed. After the exchange of very friendly greetings on the part of the members, the session was opened under the joint presidency of the chairmen of the two committees, the Rev. Dr. Gerhart and the Rev. Dr. Ganse; the Rev. Dr. Reiter and the Rev. Dr. Corwin being the secretaries. It was agreed, at the suggestion of Rev. Dr. Ganse, that the morning session be spent in free mutual conference on the principal characteristics, laws and customs of the two churches. This looked like a sort of introduction, very useful in its way, to the definite work the committees had been commissioned to do. Quite a number of points were discussed; many important facts brought out, much brotherly feeling shown. The best of spirit prevailed. It was difficult to stop. Among the points and facts developed, the following are probably of most account. We give them as near in the language of notes, taken at the time, as we can:

*The Reformed Church in the United States holds as its Confessional Standard only the Heidelberg Catechism.*

*Question:* Does it give the Catechism its interpretation from the Calvinistic or the Arminian point of view on the matters in dispute between these two types of thought?

*Answer:* The Catechism is German in its origin, and does not, in any direct way, grow out of the controversy on predestination and free will. It is held, therefore, that it is not primarily concerned about either view, and makes no formal or final decision either way. It is Calvinistic rather than Arminian in its general structure, and is interpreted as being far broader than Calvinism on the decrees and kindred subjects.

*Question:* Would a candidate for the ministry in the Reformed Church in the United States be specially examined on the doctrine of predestination? Would he be rejected for holding Arminian views? Is a large proportion of its ministers Arminian?

*Answer:* He would probably not be specially examined on the doctrine of predestination; though, the matter being free, there is

great diversity in practice in the different Classes and Synods. His holding either Calvinistic or Arminian views would be no cause in itself for his rejection. Some of the ministers are, doubtless, strict Calvinists respecting the decrees; others are Arminian; the great majority, probably, occupy a stand-point which seeks to combine the truths underlying the doctrines of predestination and free-will, in a higher unity.

*Question* : Would a minister coming from the Reformed Church in America, presumably a strict Calvinist, and having a regular call from a congregation of the Reformed Church in the United States, be received on the strength of his certificate of honorable dismission from the former body?

*Answer* : He would. The fact that the two bodies are in friendly official correspondence with each other would determine that matter.

*The Reformed Church in America holds as its confessional standards the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession and the Articles of the Synod of Dort.*

*Question*. Are these standards of equal authority? and is the Church strictly Calvinistic on the doctrine of Predestination?

*Answer* : They are of equal authority; and the Church is strictly Calvinistic, though not in the supra-lapsarian sense.

*Question* : Do candidates for the ministry have to subscribe the three formulas?

*Answer* : They do.

*Question* : Given, the case of a minister of the Reformed Church in the United States, regularly dismissed, and having a proper call from a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, would he be received into the latter body on the strength of his certificate of honorable dismissal from the former?

*Answer* : He would not. It would be required of him, as of all ministers, to subscribe a formula binding him to the three standards.

In the Reformed Church in the United States, the baptized children, as they come to years of maturity, are gathered into catechetical classes, and instructed in the doctrines of Christianity according to the Catechism, (which they commit to memory,) for a period of from four months to a year, as circumstances allow. Those who then apply for confirmation, being approved by the

consistory, are confirmed, and admitted to the Holy Communion. Confirmation also invests them with the full rights of membership.

In the Reformed Church in America, the pastor preaches on the Catechism ~~once~~ every Lord's day in the year, as a rule. Catechetical classes, in the sense in which they are found in the other Church, are not formed. The youth of the Church are received into full membership by public announcement of their names, after an approved examination by the consistory.

In the Reformed Church in the United States, several Liturgies, or Orders of Worship, are in use. The extent of their use is left free with the proper authorities of the congregations. They are expected to be used in the case of baptisms, communions, church-festivals and special occasions generally. As a rule, congregations employ an Order of Worship to such extent as they deem most conducive to edification in their particular cases.

In the Reformed Church in America, the old Palatinate Liturgy, altered to suit, is in use. Free worship, so-called, is the rule in congregations; except on specified occasions and for specified acts, when the use of the Liturgy is obligatory upon all.

Other matters discussed are sufficiently referred to in the report of the sub-committee, adopted at the close of Thursday morning's session. It was in the afternoon's session of Wednesday that the statements with respect to Liturgies, above given in substance, were principally made.

It being already past mid-day, the joint committee resolved to adjourn until 3 o'clock. It was also agreed that the Committees of the two Churches should meet separately, from two to three o'clock, in order that each might consult by itself as to what it deemed best to do.

*Session of the Committee of the Reformed Church in the U. S.*

At the appointed hour, the two committees assembled in the rooms respectively assigned them by the kindness of Rev. Dr. Nevin, pastor of the church. We can, of course, give no account of the proceedings of the committee of the Reformed Church in America, while in separate session. We give an outline of those of the Reformed Church in the United States.

In the first place the feeling seemed to be general that a union of the two Churches was possible. The conference of the morning



was assumed to have developed no insuperable difficulties, provided each body was willing to allow generous liberty to the other, yea, guarantee it until time should bring about such conformity, in matters on which differences now exist, as might be desirable; absolute uniformity in a large ecclesiastical body being neither possible nor desirable. The conference was supposed to have made the call for a union clearer: the question whether the requisite will and wisdom to make it real were at hand in the two bodies, was undetermined. No wild enthusiasm was manifest. There were, however, unmistakably shown a desire and determination on the part of the committee to come up fully, as far as ability and knowledge were given, to the demands of the occasion.

It was agreed that our committee should await an offer of terms of union from the other committee, inasmuch as the Reformed Church in America had officially initiated the movement. It was further agreed to go into a consideration of the entire subject, on the basis of whatever propositions the other committee might offer, in case it should offer any.

But our committee must also come to an understanding of what it, and through it the Church it represented, was willing to do, toward what end it would seek to bring the discussion in joint committee, in so far as it at present comprehended the subject. Not to enter the conference at sea as to what it thought best to be done, or as to what course to take in it, it had to answer to itself, measurably, at least, the question: *What terms of union ought to be adopted, just to the peculiarities and life of both Churches, and admitting of their living together peaceably and working harmoniously under one general organization.* These terms, indeed, could only be an outline, subject to large alteration; but still an outline showing the direction to be taken. A very general statement of views on the part of members of the committee took place. Singular unanimity in the main was manifest. After nearly all the members had spoken, some of them twice, Rev. Dr. Russell summed up the apparent sense of the committee in a brief, forcible manner, in a speech strongly favorable to union.

The time for action having come, and seeing the conclusion which he himself had reached so fully expressed on every side, the writer of this article submitted, as substantially a basis for our

action, a paper which he had drawn up after the morning conference of the joint-committee. It met with great favor. Immediately after its reading, the Rev. Dr. Williard moved its adoption by our committee. The motion was seconded by several members, among them, if we remember correctly, Drs. Reiter and Mease.

The Rev. Dr. Bomberger remarked that, owing to other important duties, he had not given the subject of union the attention he otherwise would; that he was not just clear as to what was best, but thought the paper submitted did not lodge sufficient authority in the General Synod under an organic union.

Rev. Dr. Williard replied by calling for a second reading of the paper, and directing attention to the fact that, except on the matters fundamentally reserved—reserved equally in the interest of each Church—the General Synod would have most ample powers.

On being called upon, the author of the paper corroborated this view as that intended to be expressed by the paper, adding that deficiencies on any point would naturally be corrected in joint committee, if it came to discussion and action there.

Rev. Drs. Miller, Reiter, Mease, and others, expressed themselves as favorable to the motion.

Rev. Dr. Gerhart thought it might be well if the theological status of the two Churches, on living issues now confronting the Christian world, were subjected to friendly and frank discussion in joint committee, before direct action on union took place. He would, however, not go counter to the course of the committee, but give it his support.

The Rev. Dr. Corwin, secretary of the other committee, came and announced that it was now ready for the joint session.

The motion to adopt the paper was then unanimously agreed to, and the committee adjourned.

*Session of the Joint Committee in the Afternoon.*

Upon the re-assembling of the joint committee, the question was asked whether the committee of either Church had any special communication to make as the result of its separate session.

The chairman of the committee on the part of the Reformed Church in America said that his committee had come to no definite conclusion, and hence had no formal terms of union, so far as it was concerned, to submit. As individuals, they thought it might be

well to resume the friendly conference so profitably carried forward in the morning, and so turn the remainder of the day to good account. However, if the committee on the part of the Reformed Church in the United States had any conclusions, reached by them to submit, his committee would be pleased to hear them.

The chairman of our committee now stated that it had, with great unanimity, come to two main conclusions :

1. That if the other committee made offer of any plan or terms of union, we would accept the same as the basis for the discussion of the question in its various bearings.

2. In case the other committee should not submit any such plan or terms, then it would submit a paper, upon which it had agreed, as the basis for discussing the question of union between the two Churches.

The chairman of the other committee replied that, as his committee had resolved upon nothing definite, and hence had nothing definite to offer, it was ready to hear our statement.

The reading of the basis of union, adopted by our committee, was now called for. Before it was read, the chairman distinctly called attention to its character as an outline basis, indicating our way of thinking on the subject; adding that if it should be the pleasure of the other committee to agree to a discussion of the general question under it, we would be quite willing to join in altering its terms, as the common good would seem to demand it. Rev. Dr. Bomberger made explanations of similar character. The author of the paper stated that it was somewhat hastily drawn up, with the expectation, now unfulfilled, of its being carefully revised, which accounted for its synoptical form.

The paper was read. The following is a verbatim copy of the original:

1. *Organic union.*
2. *Heidelberg Catechism, the common standard.*
3. *The Belgic Confession, the Articles of Dort, of great historical importance to the whole Reformed Church, and of authority next to the Heidelberg Catechism.*
4. *One General Synod. Powers limited, and defined.*
5. *No existing rights of District Synods or Classes to be interfered with in either body.*

6. *The status of colleges, theological seminaries, orphan homes, liturgies, orders of worship, hymn books, publication interests, to remain unaffected by this union.*

7. *Church cullus and customs, including confirmation, to be left free to the congregations of each body as now.*

*These things to be fundamentally and absolutely reserved from all legislation by the General Synod.*

*The General Synod may establish theological and other institutions, or publishing interests, publish an order of worship or hymn book, but with no power to exclude any such now existing, or to be called into existence, by rights now inhering in Synods and Classes of either of the contracting parties.*

A long pause followed. The critical moment had come. The test of professions and efforts, running through several years, was at hand. The committee on the part of the Reformed Church in the United States had now made its statement, shown its willingness to enter upon positive negotiations for union, and offered what all most probably will concede, (unless the doctrine of predestination is to be accepted even in our day as controlling in Christian theology,) a liberal basis for such negotiations. It appeared to many of us as if the other committee had not expected the harmonious agreement on our side. Reports had been set afloat, affirming that a majority of our committee were not favorable to a union of the two Churches; they were even whispered into the ears of the *Tribune* reporter during the sessions. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The solitary member of our committee who claimed to be "confused" on the subject, to use his own expression, was the one who would likely be supposed most anxious for the union. Yet he appreciated the generous zeal of his committee, and went with it. To whatever extent, if any, our Dutch brethren had given ear to the reports in question, they must now have seen to what unwise and misinformed prophets they had listened. Be this as it may, the offer made seemed to come like the unannounced arrival of a guest, whom it is a matter of equal delicacy to bid leave or stay.

The first to break the somewhat painful suspense was the Rev. Dr. Van Zandt, professor in the theological seminary at New Brunswick. He said, in substance, he could not speak for the

other members of the committee of the Reformed Church in America. He must, in the main, confine himself to his own views. The paper offered would not bring a satisfactory union; nor did he see how such a one could be reached. The present union feeling in Protestant Christendom was largely an epidemic. It was a popular thing, and men ran wild in its behalf. There was probably not as much wisdom underlying it as it had popularity. It would abate by and by. The Protestant denominations had gotten along well heretofore. So had the the two Reformed Churches. They had served the Master in their separate organizations, and had made themselves a blessing to men. Why should they not continue in the same course? He could see no good reason; none, especially, that would make union between them imperative. They, of his committee, had also heard that there were divisions among the brethren of the other Church, and they naturally would rather not be a party to them. His advice, therefore, was that both bodies should rest satisfied with the existing relations between them, until God should in His wise providence make a different course clearly manifest.

Rev. Dr. Gordon held that the two Churches were not prepared for an organic union. There must first be oneness of doctrine. Other matters, as government and cultus, could be arranged, he supposed. But, in his view, there was not the same apprehension of the doctrines of grace in the two bodies which were to be parties to this union. That was fatal. The German Church held the Heidelberg Catechism simply as its confession; the Dutch Church, this Catechism in connection with the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort. Hence the difficulty. The doctrines of grace are not looked at just in the same way. In fact, there is a far reaching difference. He was, of course, only giving his own view; but so it appeared to him.

Rev. Dr. Taylor alluded to other obstacles in the way of an organic union of two such old, well-established churches. There were property interests, endowments, chartered rights. Customs, modes of thought, forms of worship, were not just the same. Organic union would require the German Church to add two Confessions to the one it now has; or his Church either to drop or give a secondary position, as proposed in the paper offered, to two of its

honored standards. He would not say that a solution of these difficulties could not be reached; but it would take time.

The members of the committee of the Reformed Church in America had spoken frankly, definitely. Ours had simply listened. The union movement was at an end. What now to do was not so clear. Our committee felt somewhat sore. There was no mistaking that. There was good reason for it. It felt that the Reformed Church in the United States had not been dealt with in a very desirable way, from the inception of this movement at Albany, in the spring of 1872, until now, if such was the state of mind in which, at bottom, the other Church stood toward it. That Church had a perfect right to its way of thinking cheerfully accorded; but that way of thinking, it was now evident made union, from the very start, impossible.

Parenthetically it may be remarked that both Churches, doubtless, felt the force of many and strong reasons why a union between them should be effected. In the case of each Church there were, however, also specific reasons which weighed with it against such union. By the Reformed Church in America, these latter were allowed the ascendancy. By the Reformed Church in the United States, they were subordinated to the greater good which it was hoped the union would secure.

The following seemed to be leading difficulties in the mind of the Dutch Church:

1. It felt itself unable to give the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort a secondary confessional position, the inevitable necessity for which, in the event of a union, was fully appreciated. If we mistake not, one of the members of the committee remarked that such a proposition would scarcely get two votes in the General Synod, he supposed.

2. It feared that the other Church was largely and necessarily influenced by its manifold relations to Lutheranism, past and present: this, moreover, to a greater extent than it was willing to assent to.

3. Various changes, of more or less importance, would inevitably come. These it did not feel inclined to invite.

4. The so-called Mercersburg Theology was not to its mind. And as this would have been an active factor in the united body, it deemed it judicious to keep clear of it.

The most prominent difficulties weighing in the mind of the German Church were substantially these :

1. Being mainly a German body as to its origin, it naturally felt that the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort, even when assigned a secondary position, but backed by so active and intelligent a people as our Dutch brethren, would still be an uncomfortable element in the united body.

2. The strong inclination, so repeatedly shown for a few years past, and to the very moment of the meeting of the joint committee, by the Reformed Church in America, to coalesce, in one form or another, with the American Presbyterian Church, it was feared would become a source of trouble. The general conviction in the Reformed Church in the United States seems to be, that the Reformed Church, distinctively so called, has a very great deal of practical and theoretical work to do, on its own broad, historical basis, before it can afford to involve itself in the complications which any probable coalescing process with that body would of necessity involve.

3. A third difficulty lay at home. There is a large, European-born, German element in the Reformed Church in the United States. It is rapidly growing, and has every prospect of continuous growth. With the best will on its part, and with equally the best will on the part of the English-speaking element, the majority now in the Church, some friction will occasionally occur, generally growing out of the question of language : this when the two are allied as closely as kinship can be. Under the union, the disparity of numbers with regard to language would be much greater, the average kinship (if the expression be allowed) less close, and occasional friction, or whatever one may please to call it, far more likely. The English-speaking element would obtain such an overwhelming majority, that only by the exercise of the utmost discretion, it could deal justly with its German-speaking brethren.

But to resume. When the Rev. Dr. Taylor had concluded his speech, and it had become evident that the other side was looked to for an expression of its views of the case as it now stood, the Rev. Dr. Russell rose. He expressed his disappointment and regret at the course this union movement had taken, and concluded by offering a resolution declaring the labor of the joint committee ended, and looking to an immediate adjournment. After further



remarks from different members of both committees, this resolution was withdrawn, to make room for another, offered at the suggestion of Rev. Dr. Ganse. It provided for the appointment of a sub-committee, consisting of three members from each Church, with instructions to draw up a paper, carefully stating the results of the Conference, in proper form for submission to the General Synods of the two Churches, and report the same for adoption at a special session of the joint committee the next morning. This resolution was adopted. The members of the sub-committee were;

*Reformed Church in America.*—Rev. Drs. Ganse, Van Zandt, and Taylor.

*Reformed Church in the United States.*—Rev. Drs. Gerhart, Miller, and Bomberger.

The report of this committee, as it was subsequently unanimously adopted, is herewith appended :

The Committees of Conference appointed by the General Synods of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Reformed Church in America, met in Philadelphia on the morning of Nov. 18, 1874, and spent in joint sessions the greater part of that and the succeeding day. After a very free and brotherly interchange of information concerning the organization, symbols, doctrinal sentiments and usages of the two denominations, the committees agreed upon the following statement of the results of their conference :

1. Such large and obvious elements of likeness and sympathy as exist between the two bodies seem to point very plainly to some ultimate union between them. They are almost identical in name, as in origin and in early history. Their ecclesiastical organization and nomenclature of consistory, classis, synod, and general synod, are substantially the same. One venerable symbol, the Heidelberg Catechism, is held in common by the two denominations. The body of doctrine which either Church derives from this common symbol of necessity have close and fundamental resemblances. The committee have found, moreover, a perfect unity of method and spirit in the devotional acts which they have performed together, and their whole interview has reminded them of the essential unity of their work of caring for those continental Christians of the Reformed faith who are so widely distributed over the newer parts of our country. With these and similar points of contact between the two bodies, the committee cannot believe that they will abide apart.

2. The committees have further found with gratification that some elements of seeming difference between their two denomina-

tions have, upon fuller information concerning them, lost much of their apparent importance. In particular, the usage of confirmation prevails in the Reformed Church in the United States and is unknown in the Reformed Church of North America; but as it is interpreted in the constitution of the first-named Church, it is plain that it may fully consist with the principles and methods by which the other Church admits her baptized youth to full communion. It does not appear therefore that the continuance of that usage on one side or the abstinence from it on the other, ought to be a decisive obstacle to union. The observance of festal religious days in the Reformed Church in the United States, though very general, is not enjoined, and therefore stands upon the same footing with the same observance as it prevails, though to a less extent, in the Reformed Church in America. Even such divergences as may exist in the matter of liturgical services, so long as they might not be seen to turn upon important differences of doctrinal belief, might be harmoniously adjusted. The Committee, indeed, have little doubt that all the minor elements of difference which have grown up in the two Churches during their separate life could either be softened or accommodated in a cordial and intelligent attempt to bring these Reformed Churches under a single banner.

3. The committees, however, are constrained to say that some other obstacles to union seem to be of a less manageable character. The most patent of these lies in the fact that while both of these denominations accept the Heidelberg Catechism, the Reformed Church in America adds to this symbol the Belgic Confession and the Canons of the Synod of Dort. In order, therefore, to an organic union of the two bodies, the one or the other would be compelled to make a material change in its doctrinal standards. Since neither committee feels prepared to advise its Synod to make so important a concession, they can only agree in making a frank statement of this difficulty, in the hope that time and the best wisdom of the two denominations, and, above all, the providence of God, may direct to its final solution. In addition to this, the probable fact that a body made up of these two denominations would include important differences in doctrinal views and ecclesiastical feeling, has appeared during the conference. These obstacles seem to preclude any further present negotiations in the direction of organic union. The committees, in conclusion, are fully persuaded that although their interview has developed no plan or distinct prospect of the organic union of their two Churches, a real advance toward that most desirable result has been made in the frank and friendly conference which has now been held. The difficulty of merging denominations so old and so well established could not be expected to be small. It is something gained to be able to see at what point the obstacles are greatest. Not less valuable is that cultiva-

tion of brotherly acquaintance, esteem, and sympathy which the conference has greatly furthered. The ultimate issue of their interview the committee intrust to Christ, the one Head of the one Universal Church, in the faith that He has kindled in these sister denominations the desire of union, and that He will not suffer the desire to fail.

---

#### ART. VI.—HUMAN LIABILITY TO ERROR.

PROF. GEO. N. ABBOTT.

---

Somewhere it has been set down as the advice of Benjamin Franklin, that, instead of saying, "It is so and so," one should better say, "It seems to me to be so and so."

Although this advice is said to have been given with primary reference to the promotion of modesty of assertion, yet there may be in it at least an indirect recognition of a principle of philosophy which has for some time been receiving large attention on the part of certain thinkers, and which now seems to be unsettling the objective certainty of much that has long passed for immovable truth. If, in times past, a person whose faith-faculty was too little developed has been characterized as one who would not believe any further than he could see, the range of incredulity is vastly widened now, when colors, sounds, and even, according to some, the forms of objects are only translations of certain nervous affections to suit our mode of ideation; what nature does in each case being as different from the perceptions occasioned in our minds as the clicks of the telegraph are from the thoughts which pass through the practiced listener's mind while he hears them.

No longer are there really red, blue, or purple objects, except so far as a certain reflex activity of the subject sends back, from a manufactory within, the tissue it has woven out of successive undulations coming from without; the colors being more or less vivid or distinct, according as the manufacturing process is more or less perfect. To use a vulgar phraseology, the seeming colored

object is "all in our eye ;"\* or, since we may no longer assert with assurance that there is even an image formed on the retina, the colored object may be several degrees more subjective than if it were in the eye. Again, in the case of hearing, it would seem that the translations and transformations between the objective cause and the subjective effect are as numerous and great as if one should deliver a verbal message to a telegrapher, the latter should translate it into rhythmically determined motions of his key, the message again appearing in a succession of lines and dots, and finally reaching its destination in the form of ordinary manuscript; the last being all that the recipient has any direct cognizance of.

As regards the sense-world, then, we are almost forced into the position which Socrates, in his modesty, voluntarily took when he condensed his entire pretension to wisdom into a simple assertion that he knew nothing, except the bare fact that he knew nothing. There is, no doubt, a world of objective truth and reality; so there is a sphere of subjective truth; but the difficulty is to draw the line between the two, so as to be able to say, on this side is the ego's representation, and on that side the "thing in itself." That the sweetness or sourness of the apple is in the sensation, and not in the apple, is apparent enough on reflection; though of course the taste is not independent of an objective quality. But when we come to such ideas as bulk, number, figure, motion, and rest of bodies, we arrive at disputed ground; one class of philosophers confidently affirming that these "primary qualities" are really in bodies, whether any one perceive them or not; while others see no reason for making such a distinction in favor of "primary qualities," but offer grave reasons for believing their being (*esse*),

\*Since the above was written, K. Ch. Planck's "Anthropologie und Psychologie" (Leipzig, 1874) has come to hand; in which the present *subjective* theories of perception are combated. According to the author, there is objective, as well as subjective, truth in vision. So, doubtless, the magnetism induced by galvanic electricity exhibits the truth of the electricity; and, were our senses fine enough, we might, perhaps, perceive a *phenomenal unity* in what falls under two aspects at present, because our senses are too gross for the higher apprehension.

Now if we think of *color* as a phenomenal effect induced in the sensorium, can we be sure that, in the case, something analogous to the magnetic effect of an electric cause has not taken place? Speaking cautiously, then, might we not call color *subjective*,—leaving its unity with an objective fact for future discovery?

as well as that of sounds, colors, and flavors, to be their being perceived (*percipi*).

, And when we remember that the men of the past and of the present who have maintained these opposite opinions have never been proved to be out of their senses, or intellectually inferior to the very best thinkers, may we not well take Franklin's advice, and say, "it seems to me" that things are, or are not, what they purport to be; in preference to giving some modern Socrates the trouble of showing by a scrutinizing cross-examination that we really know nothing, "but are not aware of the fact."

Again, is the case essentially different with regard to the thought-world from what it is with the sense-world? Is there no difficulty in apprehending the true nature of thought? Is it an easy matter to reconstruct another's thought? Is it the easiest thing for one clearly to know what he thinks himself? A recent editorial passage in one of the prominent journals of the day oracularly announces that "multitudes of people do not think what they think they think." Did the Delphic deity himself ever hit the nail better on the head? There is, no doubt, a tendency towards truth in every genuine effort of human reason; but the determination of a comet's orbit, from a few observations of its position, is a light task, compared with the tracing of the entire movement of a thought from the uncertain glimpses which we may get of it.

As an illustration of the difficulty of determining even a very simple form of thought, we may adduce the fact that no thoroughly satisfactory definition of a straight line has yet been constructed. The definition which says that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points does not seem to furnish any proper method of mental construction;\* and an effort to supply this lack has led to the definition: "A straight line is one which has at every point the same direction." But here we seem to be in a circle: for the term *direction* already contains the idea of straightening. If we go back to Euclid's statement that the straight line lies "evenly," or "equally" (*ἑξίστου*), between its extreme points, we do not still get clearly the constructive principle desired. To mention another example,—the writer once heard a discussion on divergent algebraic

---

\*Possibly the stretching of a cord, so as to make the shortest portion of it extend from point to point, might have suggested this definition.

series, which, resulting unsatisfactorily to one of the parties, led to a correspondence with mathematicians of note, the result being the discovery that different views were held; some mathematicians seeming to imagine that even figures *can* lie, unless duly restrained from too free utterance; while others, having full confidence in all their deliverances, appeared willing to give them the greatest range of freedom.

Now if there is room for difference of opinion in the most clear, exact, and certain of all sciences, what is to be looked for in the nebulous realms of philosophy and theology? Indeed we need not go beyond the most elementary doctrines of logic, a department of philosophy whose sailing-craft, if the figure be allowed, scarcely ever ventures out of sight of land, to find occasion for eager disputation. The question about how much definite, and how much indefinite, meaning there is in an ordinary proposition or judgment, furnishes a bone of contention sufficient to rouse the interests, if not the passions, of the gravest men.

Proceeding on to the border-land between formal logic and concrete philosophy, we find in the controversy between nominalism and realism a "conflict of ages," not even now entirely extinct. But the wars of the gods and the Titans will hardly furnish an adequate similitude to the fearful clashings of metaphysical and theological dogma.

Yet, notwithstanding these conflicts of opinion, there would seem to be some ground for confidence in human reason; whatever view may be taken of the origin of man. If, as the Darwinians would have it, humanity is to be looked upon as the last result of nature's own workings, then ought this last and noblest utterance of nature to be the most truthful one: else would nature herself give the lie to all the assertions of science with regard to her consistency and truthfulness of design. Science itself is but an advanced evolution of reason; and if the spirit of truth be not in science, then does all the boasted development of nature end in a tissue of falsehoods. From such a consummation the scientist's faith in nature must shrink; hence it would seem that an *argumentum ad hominem* might be made out to convict him of inconsistency, in case he denies the significance of man's spiritual instincts. The most he can consistently do in this regard is to assume that those instincts, like

other phenomena of nature, have been incorrectly interpreted ; and in that view it would become the highest duty of science to set about discovering the true interpretation ; for a profound truth there must be in the most exalted manifestation which nature can exhibit, as the result of unnumbered ages of upward progress.

On the other hand, if it be assumed that man is the immediate work of God, there must be ground for believing such a work to possess, at least in the first instance, a truthful nature. If the word of God be true, His works ought to be true also ; and if there be a work which is at the same time a word, a work like reason, whose very nature is to radiate in self-utterance, should it not naturally be expected that such utterance would be essentially consistent with the character of the Creator ? The doctrine of the fall of man may come in to modify our confidence in the deliverances of human reason ; yet it would hardly seem to be accordant with the usual construction of the theory of depravity to assume that even fallen man does, in his inmost soul, feel better *satisfied* with falsehood than with truth. Indeed, some Christian philosophers appear to hold that a consciousness of the good and the true may abide, even where the ability to obey the truth has been perverted. But however much evil inclinations may be supposed to vitiate mental perception, certainly regenerate humanity ought to be not only susceptible to truth, but desirous of it. The regenerate children of the light ought to see eye to eye. But as a matter of fact, where in all history has dissension reigned more triumphantly than amid the professedly regenerate ?

The ground for variety of opinion must, it would seem then, be sought in human nature itself, rather than in any particular moral phases of it. If, as appears probable, the ultimate tendency of all genuine thinking is to truth, it may happen that the final destination of thought is not always, or even generally, reached in consciousness ; the result, for the time, being in some sense a misjudgment with regard to the proper import of the partially wrought fabric of ideation. The subjects of this incomplete ideation do not really think what they think they think. And who that thinks at all is not a subject of incomplete ideation ? Who in all the past has been known to develop, even approximately, the whole truth on any single theme ? Who does not find frequent occasion to re-



construct his own theories of former years, or at all events to complement and qualify them?

Evidences are surely not wanting, in nature, of a condition of things in which results apparently untrue to nature's own idea by some means come about, while yet every agency concerned has done its part of the work in hand with full fidelity to law; that is, if the law of its activity be extended, so as to embrace its proper behavior in relation to all other agencies with which it is brought in contact: so that analogy would indicate the probability of mental judgments more or less inconsistent, without involving the notion that reason acts fitfully, and in essential disregard of its proper method. The very light of nature is subject to many aberrations and refractions, though its first law is to move in undeviating lines. By disturbing media it is not only bent out of its course, but changed in its color, or doubly refracted; so that judgments based on its indications will sometimes be very erroneous, as compared with judgments about the same objects looked at under different circumstances. But such variations in the evidence which light gives of objects are, on investigation, found not to result from any freakishness in the light, but from its complete subjection to its own law. Perhaps it is no more to be wondered at, that reason should see things in different lights, than that the eye should see them thus.

Some men, apparently having large faith in reason as such, have seemed to take this view, and have tried to show up the causes, both subjective and outward, for the aberrations of reason. Lord Bacon is said to have classified such causes under the name of "Idols," namely, the "Idols of the Tribe, or the necessary faults and imperfections of the human intellect itself; Idols of the Den, which arise from the special constitution, education, and habits of each individual man; Idols of the Forum, proceeding from the defects of the language which we are obliged to employ as an instrument of thought and means of communication; and Idols of the Theatre, or the various dogmas of ill-founded systems of philosophy, which have found their way into men's minds through tradition, negligence, and credulity."\* The quaintness of the designa-

\* Bowen's *Logic*, pp. 37, 38.

tions of the various "idols" should not detract attention from the real significance of the idols themselves.

Without, however, making the conceptions embodied in these idols the exact molds for our present thoughts, it may be well to attempt some sort of grouping of certain misdirections to which mental activities may be liable.

In order to come at a principle for a first class of mental distortions, reference may be had to what has already been said about the mind's construction of the suggestions of sensation. If it be true that sensation in its first estate only furnishes hints for the constructive intelligence to act upon, it may be readily imagined that the activity of the latter agency will not always be duly proportioned to the occasion furnished by the former. There will be then a certain liability to make either too little or too much out of the promptings of sensation, somewhat as may be done with a *verbal* hint or suggestion. That ordinary perception fails generally to bring to consciousness as much meaning as is implied in the impression of sense, can be easily proved. Any one who has had a little practice in examining unfamiliar objects through a compound microscope may well remember the difficulty which his eye, in its first attempts, met with in giving distinct outline to the object under inspection. In case the object be something familiar, a cluster of printed words in miniature, for instance, there may be no hesitation in the visual perception; but if a fine cell-structure or some network of nature be the object, the strain on the constructive agency will be likely to be much greater. Again, an unpracticed eye will often see little more than paint at least in certain parts of an artist's landscape; while the eye of a connoisseur will at once perceive the whole in distinct perspective, though even the view of the latter will in case of a work of excellence be much improved by prolonged attention.\*

How many there are who never behold nature in her beauty,

---

\*Dr. W. B. Carpenter (*Mental Physiology*, pp. 259-60) says: "A mere sketch shall convey to one person a much more accurate notion of the object represented, than a more finished picture shall give to another; because from practice in this kind of mental reconstruction, the former recognizes the true meaning of the sketch, and fills it up in his 'mind's eye;' whilst the latter can see little but what is actually before his bodily vision, and interprets as a literal presentation that which was intended merely as a suggestion."

simply because the mind's imaging power is too little active to construct the picture which nature so winningly endeavors to make them realize of her. The difficulty of adequately describing nature becomes very apparent to any one in sympathy with the science of the day, which interests itself so much with minute and accurate observation. A recent critique on Virgil's sea-descriptions contains the remark that "literal description of any and all natural objects is still in a very rudimentary stage." As to that renowned Roman poet, the writer says: "We have to charge it against Virgil that his sea-descriptions are poor—that they are failures. Indeed, we solemnly affirm that he was what might fairly be termed sea-blind."

If we turn from sights to sounds, we find the same difficulty in attaining thorough-going perception. Where the ear with ordinary attention perceives only a single tone, a finer perception discovers a clang, embracing a set of overtones and, it may be, undertones, in addition to the leading note. If two or more notes are struck upon an instrument, the system of overtones and undertones becomes still more complex. In the case, however, of a simple clang from sounding one note, Professor Helmholtz, who is the great authority on this subject, is said to have discovered only overtones; whilst Professor Elsberg, who states this of Helmholtz, claims to "have heard, on several occasions, tones lower in pitch than the fundamental." If, then, the clangs listened to by the two experimenters were not essentially different, it appears that even the most thoroughly scientific attention of a single person is not always sufficient to bring to consciousness the phenomenon in its entirety. Probably continued investigation into the nature of sound will yet reveal numerous facts that have thus far eluded the perception of the keenest listeners.

But sensuous construction fails not merely by defect, it makes also errors, sometimes egregious ones, by way of excess. The constructive fantasy is by fear, great expectation, or other excitement, stimulated to extraordinary activity; so as to produce representations quite out of proportion with the actual sensuous impressions. Many a time the youthful traveler by night sees the animal he has learned most to dread, complete in every part; but only requiring to be assailed with a stone, in order to undergo instant

transformation into a rock or stump. The ancients, children as they were in the art of observing nature, have left evidence, not only of a wonderful failure in many cases to grasp the real significance of phenomena, but also of a more wonderful power of exaggeration and false representation. "In the sky of their days were wont to appear all sorts of terrible portents: blood-red moons, armies engaged in battle, and comets which from their horrid hair shook pestilence and war; while the showers of milk, blood, flesh, wool, stones, and burnt bricks, left it impossible to foresee what might not come down unannounced at any moment." The fauna of monsters with which they peopled the earth, the sea, and the air, furnishes evidence of an exaggerating and distorting perception, as well as of a wonder-loving fancy. To be sure there were certain things which the ancients observed carefully and accurately. Their best statuary, so nicely copying the human figure, is one evidence of this fact. But had they possessed the eyes of a modern scientist for all classes of objects, they could not have failed to look out of countenance such creatures as satyrs, hydras, harpies, griffons, and the like.

But sensuous exaggeration did not die with the ancients. In the last century, Pontoppidan, bishop of Bergen, is related\* to have described the Kraken, which had by others been "confounded with the great sea-serpent," as "not elongated as a serpent, but round, like an island, for which it was commonly mistaken." According to the Norwegian fishermen, the back of the animal is "a mile and a half in circumference, with arms long and large as the masts of a man-of-war."

Think, too, of that maelstrom off the coast of Norway, which in the days of our childhood used to draw into its fearful vortex every thing that ventured within "three miles;" but which now, along with its "illustrious predecessor," Charybdis, has been bereft of all its terrors. Again, the asserted wonders of "spiritualism" might furnish striking examples of overstrained and false perception. That a lady of undoubted veracity, and in full possession of her senses, should relate, among other feats of table-turning, that she had lifted a table from the floor, and whirled it round in the air, by merely applying a single finger to its center on the top, after it

\*In an Article on the "Fauna of Fancy."

was "excited by the circle of sitters placing their hands upon it," would probably be to most persons proof of some sort of overaction of sense-construction; yet the writer once heard such a statement from a person wanting neither the talents nor the education to give her a proper use of the perceptive faculty. Again, the sight of a strong and intelligent man overcome, even to tears, with the belief that he was holding real converse with a deceased friend, through a medium, every one of whose tricks, though ingenious, were transparent enough to a dispassionate observer, is enough to convince one that a great deal too much can be made of a little sense-material. To a similar effect go alleged cases, such as that of a person's being "transported two miles through the air, in a state of trance," lighting at length on a table in a darkened room with "doors and windows securely closed;" or that of a man's "floating from an open window of one room into an open window of another at a height of seventy-five feet above the ground."\*

Other dominant ideas than those of spiritualism may occasion a misinterpretation of sense-data; as is illustrated by a case in which, a Crystal Palace containing animals being on fire, and the chimpanzee being *supposed* to have escaped from his cage, the lookers-on, possessed with the idea of this escape, were attracted to the roof, and "saw the unhappy animal holding on to it, and writhing in agony to get astride one of the iron ribs;" when in fact they were only throwing away their sympathies upon a "tattered piece of blind, so torn as to resemble, to the eye of fancy, the body, arms and legs of an ape."†

Just as the last sentence was finished, there was related to the writer an experience of hearing, during a walk in the street, a very "clear and musical note of a new and unknown bird," the charm of which was shortly dispelled by the discovery, a little further on, that the sound came from a "hideously creaking gate." The *imagined* and the *known* sources of the sound made thus much of difference in its quality; an apt illustration of the criteria by which sentiments are judged according to their origin.

On the whole, then, it would seem that there is a very great

---

\* Carpenter, *Mental Physiology*, p. 396.

† Carpenter, *Men. Phys.*, p. 208.

range in the constructions put upon sense-impressions, from the most meagre and inadequate to the most extravagant and irrational ones. Both defective and exaggerated conceptions are among the commonest mental experiences. It follows almost as a matter of course, that in so far at least as sense-perception fails to do a truthful work for nature, the conceptions founded upon such perception must lack adequacy and propriety. The slowness of scientific progress during the past millenniums of human history may hence be accounted for; and even the keener observation, aided by the improved instruments, of the present, does not always guide science directly on the sure road to truth; as the conflicting and changing hypotheses on many points clearly prove. Indeed, so frequently are the views of scientists modified by new evidence or fresh suggestion, that one may generally, by reading a very few pages, determine with regard to a newly-printed book on science, whether the matter is really fresh, or only the paper and ink. Of her own short-comings, notwithstanding all the improvements claimed for her, science is herself so conscious as to be intensely eager for more light and more truth. That all our attempts to extract the genuine meaning from phenomena fail to realize their high aim, except very meagrely and partially, does not require any extensive showing. It is but too obvious that human thought in its sober, yet earnest, moods is greatly liable to err by defect. It sees the truth, as well as the phenomenon, through a glass darkly.

But it is not merely in carrying up the facts of experience from sense to the higher court of reason, that the mind shows lack of wisdom. It frequently fails, also, to perform the easier task of understanding the ready-wrought thoughts of other minds. How has almost every original philosopher suffered through the incapacity of his disciples to grasp his full meaning. The very efforts which adherents of schools of philosophy have made to extol the head of their sect have too often furnished to the world apparent evidence of the littleness, instead of the greatness, of him whose *ipse dixit* was so faintly imitated. The practical teacher is often only too painfully aware of the defect, in the average intellect, of an ability to apprehend the full meaning of either the text-book or the words of instruction. In fact, defective understanding is so much the rule, that it is what we usually expect; and any exhibition of an ap-

proximately perfect grasp of any single subject, except by a long course of discipline, is a matter of surprise.

On the other hand, overestimates of the import, both of occurrences in nature and of thoughts, are not unusual. The moon has in times past been imagined to control the weather and the operations of nature, as well as of the human mind, to an extent unsupported by any sufficient reason. Comets have been the terror of mankind, from the belief that wars and disasters were their natural sequents. Thunder has been regarded as the direct voice of the Lord. Eclipses have to the savage mind been the signs of divine anger. So, through the whole category of marked natural phenomena, it would seem that every defect of knowledge of the true significance has been made up for by some false or distorted meaning. What of nature has been already wrought up into thought and theory has been, perhaps, not less an occasion for overwrought fancies. To believe that the earth revolves on its axis was an intolerable heresy, because it contradicted the Bible, and hence undermined the very foundation of the Church. The later theory, that the earth has for untold ages been the theatre of progress and of life, caused, too, much confusion and fluttering; but, remembering the astronomical fright, Biblical scholars thought it better this time to review the record of creation, to see whether it might not possibly admit a new construction. Now, however, we have on hand the greatest scientific heresy of all—the theory of evolution. This is for many a really dreadful beast, and no mere bush in the darkness, animated by affrighted eye-sight. It has motion of its own, as surely as a Quixotic windmill, and will certainly do harm, unless speedily dispatched. But time and greater light will probably disclose a thing as harmless as either of its predecessors.

The evidence now adduced, though but an exceedingly small fraction of what might be brought to prove the general incommensurateness of single *subjective* states with the true import of *objective* facts, whether those facts be the phenomena of nature or of spirit, seems to indicate the *impracticability of an objective standard of individual opinion*.

To illustrate from a case which is now common talk;—the Pope might be as infallible as the most thorough-bred Ultramontane could ask us to believe: you and I could not, with our fallible



powers of apprehension, make in any strict sense his infallible deliverances our own. Probably there has been a much more general belief in the infallibility of the writings of Paul than in that of any Pope's ex-cathedral utterances; yet what two commentators have ever been found to agree throughout on the meaning of those writings? Did not Jesus himself have frequent occasion to charge his disciples with slowness of heart and want of understanding? Whether we have the spoken words of the living teacher, or the written ones of the dead, we are, as all experience shows, liable to more or less misconstruction and false apprehension.

Lapse of time is probably, in general, unfavorable to the exact reproduction of recorded thought. It may be doubted whether any vigorous thinker can precisely reproduce *his own* mental experiences of years ago. Dr. Carpenter (*Men. Phys.*, p. 456) remarks: "Though we are accustomed to speak of memory as if it consisted in an *exact* reproduction of past states of consciousness, yet experience is continually showing us that this reproduction is very *inexact*, through the modification which the trace has undergone in the interval. Sometimes the trace has been partially obliterated, and what remains may serve to give a very erroneous (because imperfect) view of the occurrence. And where it is one in which our own feelings are interested, we are extremely apt to lose sight of what goes against them, so that the representation given by memory is altogether one-sided." But, besides a possible partial obliteration, another fact of mental experience may modify memory, namely, the fact that the mind grows not merely by accretion (*exogenously*), but internally (*endogenously*); and again, not altogether, as our botanical terms in parentheses might seem figuratively to intimate, by a development, as it were, of new fibres of thought parallel to the old, but by a method which fancy may picture as involving an anastomosing of the new with the old; so that in recalling an old thought we cannot but rethink it under a multitude of new relations. In this *plexus* of experiences it may even not always be easy to distinguish the older from the newer; partly because more or less of unconsciousness may have attended the perhaps gradual process by which several apparently independent thoughts have come to modify each other.

What takes place thus in individual experience goes on in larger

measure in collective experience. The sentiments and the entire thought-currents of communities are undergoing gradual modification. As a consequence, language changes. Words in the course of time lose their old meaning and take on new ones, till oftentimes the primitive, or so-called literal, meaning is entirely beyond our reach. Even when the etymology is certainly known, it is considered a very unreliable guide to the proper present signification. Who now thinks, for instance, of an *enthusiast* as one inspired by, or full of, God (*ἐσθεος*), or of a *tube* as a trumpet (*tuba*), or of a ray of light as a staff (*radius*)? With words, phrases and sentences change their meaning; and hence old forms of speech may once have had a determinate import, which has now become indeterminate. Of the judicial oath, Hickok (*Moral Science*, p. 220) says: "The oath may imply a prayer for Divine help, or an imprecation of Divine vengeance. The usual phrase, 'So help you God,' *ita te Deus adjuvet*, may imply conscious assumption of increased responsibility, and conscious frailty under temptation and perverting influences, and thus an appeal to God to add His help to sustain the enhanced responsibility; as, 'may God so strengthen me, as in my sincerity I throw myself upon His grace.' Or, it may imply, as is more commonly understood, the imprecation of Divine desertion if the man prove false; 'so God help me only as I speak the truth.' " Suppose now, for further illustration, we take the sentence, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The phrase, *In the beginning* was until comparatively recently supposed to refer to a time which could be computed, at least approximately, by means of data given in the canonical books, taken together with the known period elapsed since the beginning of the Christian era. But, science having interposed some difficulty in the way of the seemingly obvious import, other views have come into vogue; so that the meaning of "in the beginning" seems now to float between a point of time about six thousand years ago, and the farthest conceivable point in past eternity. The sense of the word *created* seems also to be subject to some range of interpretation. In view of all the difficulties and possibilities involved, can any better *rule* of interpretation be given than that most undictatorial one: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"?

The right of private judgment in all such cases is not simply a

privilege, but a necessity, if one is to judge at all. If the human mind really puts any construction on what is presented to its view, it will put its own construction. Private opinion may perhaps, in most cases, be stunted in its growth by forced suppression of utterance; for thought thrives by communication; but so long as it lives at all, it will still retain its subjective character. Auxiliary objective evidence will of course enter into the results of deliberation, and every new evidence will work more or less change; but still there will hold good of the mental vision what Carlyle says of the natural: "A man can see what he brings an eye to see."\*

Again, the subjective peculiarity of apprehension is not limited to the simple rendering which each mind makes for itself of what is objectively presented. Ideas do not come into the mind solitary and single, or by one simple series. As a showy street procession is generally accompanied on either side by a moving throng of spectators, so is every regular train of thought waited upon by several collateral trains. The Shakespearean drama, with its main plot and accompanying side-plays, furnishes an illustration. Now these side-plays, which fancy by the law of association or otherwise connects with a main consideration, often furnish a large share of what really occupies the mind. Suppose one is giving what is called strict attention to an orator; what is heard may direct the drift of mental action, but memories, illustrations, criticisms, objections, inferences, questions, applications, and the like, often so crowd in as to straiten, if not to close up, the passage-way for the speaker's line of thought.

Nor is this crowding in of accessory thoughts confined to the hearer. It belongs to the experience of the speaker as well. Not seldom indeed does a lively speaker seem to leap from one train of

---

\*Charles A. DeKay, in a recent article in *Scribner*, entitled "A Bouquet of Japanese Verses," after giving the following translation from the Japanese—"In the harbor of Naniwa the flowers of the trees which ought to bloom after winter, now that the spring is come, they blossom, the flowers of the trees"—goes on to say: "Judging from those we comprehend more fully, it is impossible to say that the words are not poetical to Japanese, for we cannot tell what depth of suggestion they may contain. The poet tries to give only just enough to point the reader to the direction his thoughts should take, and leaves to him the supreme pleasure of discovery. What fearless reader of Emerson has not gained a subtle delight from wringing the essence of thought from his obscure simplicity?"

thought to another, and sometimes with wonderful effect. Even a new train of mental imagery may be started by some casual occurrence, leading a speaker into a strain of eloquence as surprising to himself as to his hearers. In reading, as well as in hearing, we are frequently to understand much more than is said at all. We are to "read between the lines," if we would get the true meaning. "The cloak which I left at Troas bring with thee," appears to be a common-place request; but when these words are thought of as those of one confined in a deep, damp dungeon, laboring "under the sufferance of racking pain, and surrounded with unutterable horrors," and "communicating with the world for the last time," the common-place vanishes, and the simple words mean volumes.

From what has been said, it is easy to infer that there are two obstacles in the way of an exact understanding of the thoughts of other men and other times; one obstacle being the fact that no man ever expresses his mind completely, and the other, that no man can enter so fully into sympathy with another as to reproduce his mental experience, even though that experience were given in a form as lively as "thoughts that breathe and words that burn."

The idea, then, of an *objective standard* of precisely what we shall think, believe, or pray for, seems utterly futile and inconsistent; the strict unification of the subjective and objective implied in such an idea being, beyond all apparent question, impossible.

A word of caution may here not be out of place. Because any attempt to comprehend the thought of the past can effectuate at best an approximation, involving some accommodation of the original import to the capacity of the recipient mind, there is on this account no justification for the act of purposely putting an unmeant construction upon a revered old formulary, for the sake of making it appear that one agrees with it. It may be very pleasant to imagine that we find consent to our pet opinions in the great worthies of the past. It may even be natural to take a little pride in being able to teach our less illuminated predecessors what their own words really meant. But would it not be more honest to confess that, on account of our changed standpoint, we find reason to differ from them?

We have now considered a few phases of the errors to which the human mind is subject, by virtue of its peculiar inner constitution;

by virtue of the fact that each mind takes in data through its own peculiar media, in consequence of which there is liability to diminution or exaggeration of the reality, as well as to a variety of false coloring. Such errors might perhaps be called collectively *errors of impression* or *errors of subjectivation*.

Corresponding to the process of subjectivation or internizing, there is a process of objectivation or externizing: and, after considering the imperfections of impression, it would seem natural to suspect a probable imperfection of expression. Indeed, expression or utterance may be regarded as in an important sense a *reflex* of impression. The intimate relation of the two has, in fact, led us to trench upon this second part of the subject in the discussion of the first. Still there is need of a further development.

The expression of emotion furnishes ready illustrations of excess and defect, similar to what have been adduced in regard to cognition. A moderate degree of pleasure, grief, or anger, will show itself in a most pronounced manner in the case of one person; while another will scarcely indicate his deepest feelings, except it be by reserve or silence. Indeed the same individual may at different times incline to excess, and to defect, of utterance. To be sure, pent up emotion will do its work in some way. Silent grief has been said to bring on the death of its subject. But such a result, though in a philosophic sense it may be an utterance of the feeling, is not so to the casual observer; and to such the same apparent cause of feeling must seem in different cases to produce very different degrees of manifestation.

In regard to thought, too, there is perhaps as little proportion between the reality and the utterance as in the case of emotion; though, from the fact that thought awakens less sympathy, the disproportion may be less striking. That it is recognized is shown by the remark often made of a person of peculiarly fluent utterance, that "he talks too much"; while a man of taciturn habits not seldom gets credit for a large fund of secreted wisdom.

Not to dwell on this particular phase of the subject, it may be interesting to note a few variations in the manner of objectivating ideas, which seem to have more or less relation to gradation in culture, or to be subject to some kind of periodicity growing out of the rhythm of history.

It may be remarked that the inward movements of the human soul are evidenced in several ways; as by language, gesticulations and attitudes, rites and ceremonies, representations by pictures and solid figures, symbols, etc.

In tracing any cultivated language from its earlier to its later stages, it is obvious that in its earlier condition it is more the reflex expression of sensation and perception; and that it gradually acquires a power to express abstractions, and to mark the subtleties of speculative thought. Language, in other words, varies with the development of the national mind of which it is the utterance. The poets, with their panoramas of sensuous imagery, come before the philosophers and the scientists, with their arrays of unseen forces, and their armories of technical terms. Indeed, some go so far as to assume that all language has an interjectional foundation; the primitive ejaculatory expressions of emotion being, by time and experience, worked-up into sense-words. Others, however, who would not go to that extreme, still assert that "savages possess in a high degree the faculty of uttering their minds directly in emotional tones and interjections; of going straight to nature to furnish themselves with imitative sounds, including reproductions of their own direct emotional utterances, as means of expression of ideas, and of introducing into their formal language words so produced."\* Another way of characterizing to the same effect the earlier growth of language would be to say, that it deals largely in metaphors, presenting itself, like the old picture-writing, in concrete, living forms addressed to the perceptive, rather than to the conceptive, faculty. Indeed the savage, with his few articulate words, and his many significant inflections, intonations, and gestures, makes himself into a sort of figure of speech, in broad contrast with, for instance, the modern English parliamentary orator, who is said to speak with the air of one "conversing on public affairs." It cannot be said that the latter is less in earnest than the former; any more than that the person of mature mind, who reads the most thrilling narrative with closed lips and changeless countenance, is less in earnest than the child that accompanies the nervous movement of its eye along the line of words with an audible whisper.

---

\*Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol. I., p. 163.



To the same effect may be adduced the difference of manner in the same speaker before different audiences. The "fine phrensy" of the lawyer, which may "avail much" with a jury of unlettered men, must be exchanged for a discriminating dialectic in order to influence a court composed of men learned in the law. Lively expression is more effective with the less cultured mind, because such a mind unites the expression and the meaning, the form and the substance, more closely. It may perhaps have occurred to the reader, in watching the development of early childhood, to be surprised at the child's eager recognition of the human figure, or the figure of familiar animals, in a picture. To the little girl her dolls, with their miniature furniture and utensils, seem to be not, as they are to older persons, mere images of realities, but in a sense the realities themselves. It is wonderful, too, how faint a resemblance to a human likeness will serve the purpose of embodying the child's conception of humanity. Almost anything to call a doll will do.

A similar facility in transferring the fancies of the brain to an objective receptacle belongs to the child-nature of the savage. Tylor (*Primitive Culture*, Vol. II., p. 151,) remarks: "The conception of such human relics [of dead friends] becoming fetishes, inhabited or at least acted through by the souls which formerly belonged to them, would give a rational explanation of much relic-worship, otherwise obscure. A further stretch of imagination enables the lower races to associate the souls of the dead with mere objects, a practice which may have had its origin in the merest childish make-believe, but which would lead a thorough savage animist straight on to the conception of the soul entering the object as a body. Mr. Darwin saw two Malay women in Keeling Island, who held a wooden spoon dressed in clothes, like a doll; this spoon had been carried to the grave of a dead man, and becoming inspired at full moon, in fact lunatic; it danced about convulsively like a table or a hat at a modern spirit seance."

As regards the method by which an idea is made to take up an abode in any particular receptacle, there is perhaps more generally no special effort or conscious intention in the matter. People who believe a house to be haunted are not aware of any mental act on their part by which it has become so. That is all the work of the



ghostly inhabitants themselves. Almost as little is fancy aware of any agency in arraying Virtue in robes of spotless white, in directing thought upward to the residence of the Good, or in painting Hope in rainbow-hues. Ideas themselves are generally credited with a power to display their own characters under appropriate aspects and conditions.

There are not wanting, however, cases of conscious effort to incorporate ideas. The popular writer or speaker has frequent occasion to seek an illustration or a metaphor into which to put his thought, in order to give it tangibility. He may, in such case, be quite aware of the labor of so shaping the receptacle that it will just take in the proposed notion. If he be inventive, he will probably make new connections of forms and ideas—of the bodies and souls of thought; and to that extent he will be making new language. In this procedure, though possibly sometimes the illustration may be father to the thought, yet for the most part there is an evident pre-existence of the idea. The illustration or metaphor is to take up and convey what is already a reality to the conceiving mind. The savage's embodiment of spiritual powers in a fetish occasionally bears analogy to this conscious thought-embodying process. It is said of the Dacotas, that they "would pick up a round boulder, paint it, and then addressing it as grandfather, make offerings to it, and pray to it to deliver them from danger."\* There seems evident here the notion of introducing into the stone the functional character that is to make it an object of adoration. The authority just quoted from says also that the Hindu's hollow clay idol receives no veneration for itself, but becomes an object of worship only "when the officiating Brahman has invited the deity to dwell in the image, performing the ceremony of the 'adhivâsa', or inhabitation,† after which he puts in the eyes and the 'prâna,' i. e. breath, life, or soul."

Thus the Hindu shows a dawning power to distinguish between the deity and his local residence; and it may be added that even the savage African believes the god is not bound to the image, or

---

\*Tylor, *Prim. Cul.*, Vol. II., p. 161.

†It might, perhaps, be a question worthy of consideration, whether the consecration of churches be not historically somehow related to this ceremony.

that he "is present sometimes with more and sometimes with less intensity." In partial justification of the Hindu's intelligence in comparison with our own, we might say that his ceremony of inviting-in the spirit is analogized in the ordinary process of putting a meaning into a new word one may chance to meet with. The definition is looked up and thought into the word henceforth to be its embodiment. Again, the statement that in Peru, "when the worship of a certain sacred stone was given up, a parrot flew from it into another stone, to which adoration was paid," as well as similar statements with regard to conveyances of spiritual influence by birds or otherwise to and from idols in Polynesia;\* are also partly paralleled in the transfer of an idea from one word to another in the course of linguistic revolution, or even in an ordinary case of translation. The old theory of heat and electricity, as invisible fluids passing into and out of solid bodies, has been adduced as another illustration of the same point.

But although there may be found in the lower stages of culture such symptoms of an incipient ability to distinguish between idea and symbol, it still cannot fail to appear that the untutored mind in general puts the invisible power and the sensible manifestation in much closer relation than does the cultured intellect. Deity, in order to be approachable, must also be sensible. The sensible form becomes the reality, beyond which it is not necessary to look for a hidden power or force. At all events, the average image-worshiper, no doubt, practically makes no conscious distinction between spirit and image, but invests the latter with all the powers and functions of the former.

Absurd as such a view may be to us, we may yet readily see that it does not imply an absolute estrangement from the highest type of intelligence. Survivals of a modified fetishism may be recognized in official garments and badges, in habiliments of mourning, in emblems, &c. A trace of the same principle may be seen in the

---

\*Miss H. G. Brittan (in *Christian Witness*) gives the method of transfer of Jugernaut from one image to another, by taking out of the body of the old idol a small box which is supposed to hold the spirit of the god, and placing it inside the new image. Modern spiritualists carry the matter of spirit transfer still further, in believing that "spirits of the living as well as of the dead" can be "summoned by mediums to distant spirit circles."

general tendency to *formulate*, and then to regard the formula as being a kind of embodiment of the forces or principles involved. How many a youth will give, on being inquired of for the reason of a numerical process, the *rule*, without a thought that the rule requires a reason, just as much as his operation. The *law* of gravity, the mere formulation of the force's mode of action, is often confounded with gravity itself. Wording is so nearly confounded with thinking, that some intelligent persons suppose it impracticable to think without words, or to know without being able to state the knowledge in language.

If, indeed, it shall turn out, according to the hypothesis of some, that the agency of the *sensorium* is strictly a condition of all-consciousness, it may be that an entire riddance of the fetish principle is not so easy to be accomplished. The resort of science to such expressions as "imponderable bodies," "electric fluid," and "ultimate atoms," shows how difficult it is to get clear of a sensuous element in any conception of the forces of nature. Some of the old terms of this class are now discarded; but the question might be asked whether the substituted expressions, though freed from some of the grossness of the old, do not bear fetish traces, to be further reduced by advancing approximations to the truth. Descartes is said to have assumed that the agency of the nerve in transmitting an impression upon a sensory organ to the brain was due to the flow of "animal spirits" along the nerve. Huxley would have us say, that the same transmission is due to the propagation of a "molecular change" along the nerve.\* But should a modification of the molecular theory take place, as already a modification of the cell theory has done, the statement of nervous transmission might perhaps require a further adjustment. The expression *molecular change* is on its face very inadequate to a *distinct* conception; too, little removed, indeed, from the indifferent character of the hollow clay image which, for aught we can see, might have one kind of spirit *invited* into it as well as another. The remark of Berkeley, that "the greatest men, when they give way to abstraction, have recourse to words having no certain signification, and, indeed, mere scholastic shadows," is all too applicable to even the best attempts at giving form to thought.

\* Address before the British Association at Belfast, August 25, 1874.

Let it not be supposed that it was meant to be said the phrase "propagation of molecular change," is no improvement on the Cartesian one "flow of animal spirits," for the intimation of what really takes place in nervous conveyance. The latter gives the notion of a material *stream*; while the former suggests some sort of a change of mood, progressing from particle to particle along the fiber, without any *large* motion of single particles. Now it is, doubtless, as great a mistake to suppose a material flow along the nerve as to think water flows in horizontal undulation.\* A false notion is eliminated, then, by a change of terms. The present rapid progress of science is constantly requiring new adjustments of language to a better knowledge of the facts; the result being, that the intimate relation once existing between word and idea, is becoming much broken in upon. A family, by a frequent change of residence, loses identity with a certain dwelling or locality; while with the permanent landed estates of Europe, the "house" is a sort of fetish for the family. The transmigration of ideas from one symbol to another, surpasses in frequency even the locomotive American's change of homes. The stenographer gives his version of a speech, intelligible only to the initiated; this is transcribed into "copy" for the compositor, who puts it in "type"; and at length it comes in "print" to the eye of the reader, who makes out of the most arbitrary succession of signs, the probable meaning of the one who first gave signals of his cogitations by audible articulations.

Persons partially ignorant of the transmigrations and successive disembodiments which thought undergoes in the modern modes of transmission, like the man who was sure his message had not been telegraphed, because he could see it "hanging on the hook," or like the other who thought the reason why he did not hear a message was that he was "a little deaf in one ear," may not be aware of the degree of conventionality involved in these methods of communication. Indeed, so slow, oftentimes, is the mind in drawing *obvious* inferences, that the pianist may scarcely have seriously

---

\*It ought, perhaps, to be noted here, that scientists, by the use of the terms "nerve-waves," "molecular motions," &c., make their meaning on the whole as clear, perhaps, as the present state of knowledge will allow; although the single expression "molecular change," seems rather vague.

thought how unsympathizing a mechanism his fine feeling has to pass through in order to get musical utterance.

Yet the fact that an ordinary reader takes in with his eye what he sends out with his voice, so that it reaches the mind of the next recipient through the ear, ought to have taught us that thought is not strictly tied to form; or, at all events, that its true *spiritual body* is something transcending sight and sound. But if any more decided hints in this direction are wanted, the multitudinous modes of telegraphic transmission—by dots and dashes, by dots arranged to represent dots and dashes, by printing and autograph-writing, by sound, by the “flickering of a reflected ray of light,” by a waving ink-line, etc.—would seem to leave little to be desired in proof of the essential indifference of ideas to modes of communication. However naturally spoken language may have originally sprung up and grown into beautiful proportions, it is no longer the divine incarnation of thought that it once was.\* A man’s words, written or spoken, are indications of his thinking; and the sensations they awaken suggest *what* he is thinking, somewhat as the smell of smoke suggests what is burning.

Now, it will hardly need to be demonstrated that a tendency to disembodiment or “disestablishment” of ideas is in harmony with abstractive generalization.

The *abstract noun* of our grammars suggests a quality, as it were, issuing forth from its substance, to be caught and held fast in thought only. This analysis carried to its utmost would give

---

\*If the harmonic relations of music are the direct results of numerical ratios in the undulations of sound, so that it might be said that the combined tones actually involve the ratios, then there might seem to be some sense in assuming that a set of thinkable relations are *embodied* in sounds. Then an *inference* might be drawn, that sentiments, as well as numerical ratios, may thus be embodied; and it might further be urged in favor of this view, that the ordinary *vowel sounds* have been demonstrated to be compound tones, made up on strictly harmonic principles. It is perhaps impossible to say how far this mode of reasoning might apply to a theory of ideal language. But it may be doubted whether our slightly developed musical perception, having thus far reached a practical range scarcely exceeding the number 7, the ordinary harmonic series, 1,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 1-3,  $\frac{1}{6}$ , being even more limited, would be able to judge very far with regard to the fitness of sound to idea. It may even be questioned whether our ordinary notions of the fitness of certain music to express certain sentiments are not derived largely from experience or conventionality. Complex experiment, and not the ear alone, discovers the fact that the octave involves the ratio of 1 to 2, the simplest of all the ratios.

all the elements in separation. Then a mental reconstruction might furnish a whole not identical with the original reality, but possessing the transparency and logical consistency of pure thought. The process, however, is never carried out in this ideal way, at least in the human mind. The course of abstraction is gradual and always partial; so that, to get a reconstructed whole, it is necessary to patch on the ideal part to the residual real; the result of which is illustrated by the ordinary combination of a substantive and adjective, as it were a half-separated and half-united fetish and spirit. Still the tendency of *progressive* mind is towards the completed ideal; and the progressive idealizing of every objectivating art is, of course, involved in the same tendency. This in principle, and to some extent in examples, we have seen from the previous discussion; but it may be interesting to trace out in a case or two how, in progressive sequence, the adaptation of language and signs to a more ideal purpose is actually made. An example in point may be had in the history of the art of numbering.

It is well known that savages (as well as children) make much use of the "digits" (fingers and toes) in counting. It is related that a person wishing to know the number of slain, on a certain occasion, in a savage country, inquired of an individual, who, after severe effort to count them up by assigning a finger to each person, at length held up his hand three times to indicate the number fifteen.\* An instance of a general method of numeration is given, where numeral words exist up to four. Then five is "a whole hand," six "one of the other hand," ten "both hands." Eleven is represented by stretching out both hands and one foot, with the words, "one of the foot," fifteen by "a whole foot," and twenty by "one Indian," forty by "two Indians," &c. A brief anecdote, once related to the writer, may be admissible, to show how the notion of *concreteness* in number clings to the partially cultivated mind. A person challenged another on a wager to "count a hundred." A third person, on hearing of this challenge and perceiving the catch, said he thought that, if he was furnished with a hundred kernels of corn, he could count them.

An advance on this concrete representation of numbers by

---

\* Tylor, *Prim. Cul.*, Vol. II., p. 244.

things, would be a full set of numeral words; which, however according to the general law of progress, will be likely to retain traces of the older method. It will be sufficient to remark, that in addition to certain etymological indications of "digit numerals," there has been bequeathed from this source to our own civilization the decimal system, with survivals of a quinary system (*e. g.* in the use of the Roman v., vi, &c., and xv. xvi., &c.) as well as of a vigesimal system (in the counting by scores). A third stage in representing numbers, is found in the use of such letter-signs as have just been adverted to in the Roman notation; and perhaps a further advanced stage in the Indian (so-called Arabic) figures—certainly more advanced in usefulness on account of the *local values* introduced; and at length algebraic computation abstracts from *particular* numbers, using only symbols of numbers and their relations in general. It may be added that the higher analysis carries the abstracting and symbolizing methods still further, and that the end of the process is "not yet." So long as new mines of meaning in quantitative relations shall continue to be opened, new modes of symbolizing will also be required.

The history of the ordinary alphabet may furnish another example. The sounds used in speech, were at one time *embodied* in the pictures (entire or partial) of objects, each having the phonetic force of the initial sound of its name, as Aleph, Beth, Gimel, ox, house, camel. These picture-forms, by a gradual reduction, became the simply suggestive characters now so familiar to us. Some attempts have been made, as is known, to get an alphabet more completely phonetic. It is by no means impossible that efforts in this direction, when more scientifically undertaken, may eventually succeed. Indeed, they have already succeeded largely, as regards short-hand writing.

A case of still greater reduction from an archetypal form occurs in signs of reverence, if Herbert Spencer is right in his conjectures. According to his view, the act of prostration in presence of a sovereign or a feudal lord has been in various ways abridged; for instance, in the reverence of the Russian serf, who bends his head to the ground; and in the salaam of the Hindu, which is farther abbreviated successively into a bow and a nod. Again, the curtsy is conceived to be an abridged act of kneeling; and as the Mohammed-



dan worshiper not only kneels but bows his head to the ground, the curtsy may well be styled "an evanescent form of the aboriginal prostration." Even the act of "bowing and scraping" is explained as a preliminary to going on one knee.\* The result in these cases is that mere intimation of proper respect takes the place of a humiliating act.

Thanks to growing intelligence! We are no longer obliged to count altogether on our fingers, to read only from characters rudely and laboriously made by hand, or to lie down in the dust in literal self-abasement before a superior. Nor will improving civilization be likely in such respects to go back on itself. To stick tenaciously to old symbols, whether in the form of words, institutions, customs, or anything exponential of a deliverance of human nature, must then be like clinging to one's own baby-talk. Neither are the *fathers* so much honored by our exact imitation of their manners as seems by some to be imagined. The young man who could not give up carrying a stone in one end of the bag to balance the grain in the other, because his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had used that same stone for that same purpose, so far from honoring that line of ancestry, proved rather its incapacity for upward development. About the only use the present age can make of such a man is to prove by him that man has never made advancement, much less could ever have come up from an ape. Such a proof may be, to some at least, worth all it costs; but the party of progress will assume that, though there may be apparent "dead points" in a generally onward movement, though there may be real retrogressions—eddies in the current of history—and possibly may be such a thing as "going back to get a better start," still preference is to be given to signs of change from the grosser to the more ideal, from superstition to reason. Think of the gladiatorial show, and of the tournament, exhibitions into which the very elite of their respective times could throw their whole souls; and then say whether the return of such exponents of popular sentiment would be evidence of real improvement. Indeed one might better employ his influence against the swimming matches and regattas of the present, than in favor of bringing back their more barbarous prede-

\*Herbert Spencer, *Universal Progress*, pp. 79, 80.

cessors; against the modern horse-race and theatre, rather than in favor of restoring the Olympic games and the ancient theatre, with their excessive immoralities.

But whether we will or not, growing civilization at large inclines to slough off, either gradually or suddenly, the wrappings of the idea which, either on account of their cramping influence or their natural wear and decay, seem no longer fitting. It seems very likely that some of the oldest integuments of human ideas have vanished, leaving no certain trace behind; as it is supposed to have happened to the earliest life-forms in geology. Besides these supposable lost forms, there are well-marked fossils. Every language, even during its vigorous life, comes to have its obsolete words; every nation its obsolete customs and laws; every generation its remembered usages that are no more. Then there are the old forms that survive, but have lost their meaning, except for children or the ignorant, or, from being serious, have become sports or amusements. Astrology, formerly "an honored branch of philosophy," is now, so far as it still exists, relegated to the ignorant and over-credulous. The bow and arrow, and the sling, once full of deadly significance, are in present civilization children's toys. "Arts of divination and games of chance are so similar in principle that the very same instrument passes from one use to the other." We may add the American boys' celebration of Hallow-eve as "corn night," as an illustration in point.

But to pass on;—many old institutions, customs, and forms of expression still occupy their old places of apparent dignity, but with a large depreciation of real meaning. "When we remember," says Herbert Spencer, "how the divinity at first ascribed to kings was not a complimentary fiction but a supposed fact; and how, further, under the fetish philosophy, the celestial bodies are believed to be personages who once lived among men, we see that the appellations of Oriental rulers, "Brother to the Sun," &c., were probably once expressive of a genuine belief; and have simply, like many other things, continued in use after all meaning has gone out of them."\* Might it not be added, that in such a country as England the king or queen, under the present style of administering the government,

---

\*Universal Progress, p. 72.

is little more than a legal fiction? a fiction which the strongest offshoot of the English nation has dispensed with, apparently without loss of either strength or unity.

Every one knows the profound significance and authority once attaching to a seal. It absorbed the whole force of a signature, which in its original import is a sealing or affixing a *signum*. The name of the instrument is still, to be sure, a high-sounding one; and it is said that the great seal of England makes its ponderous impress upon a large amount of wax in the course of a year; but the citizen of America, though occasionally getting sight of the coat of arms of some state or corporation, used mostly for the sake of keeping up appearances, cannot help thinking how little real meaning there is in a wafer covered by a blank bit of paper, or even a twirl of the pen inclosing the word "seal." The reason for a growing negligence of form is that the evidence of authorship, once inhering in the seal, has passed into the handwriting of the (now *genuine*) signature (in the modern sense); a handwriting being provable, by comparison, beyond doubt, by simple reference to an expert. Again, the marriage ceremony, which had in European civilization become such a fetish-embodiment of marriage itself, has in several at least of the American States, so far yielded its claim as sole evidence of what "God hath joined together," that other evidence is admissible; and it is said that in California, under a recently enacted statute, it is only necessary for the parties to have their assumption of the marital relation put upon record, to answer all the requirements of the law. The oath, in olden time believed to be the very palladium of truthfulness, is now put on a par with a formula of affirmation; nor would, possibly, much be lost, if this mock-oath were dispensed with.

An interesting case of prolonged life of an old rite, symbol, or word, is when there is a change, or an apparent change of import. As regards words, the changes in their signification were alluded to in a previous connection. The old sense-content is often supplanted, or partially supplanted, by a thought-content; the word becoming intellectualized, and thus possessed of more life and soul, the result being somewhat the reverse of that in which an organic form becomes petrified. Such changes are all the while going on in every language; but the modern use of the Greek

as material for the technical terms of science is quite noticeable, and may remind one of the use which the Christians one while made of the Coliseum.

The origin of Christmas, as given by Tylor, is that the Roman winter-solstice festival, in the later days of Roman paganism, celebrated on December 25th in connection with the worship of the sun-god Mythra, and deriving thence the name "*Dies Natalis Solis invicti*," birth-day of the unconquered Sun, being adopted in the Western Church, was also bequeathed to the Eastern as the "*Christian Dies Natalis*." It seems that an image of the goddess Rhea is now serving as a statue of the Virgin; and that noted kiss-worn toe of Peter is said to have been kissed by pagan lips as a toe of Jupiter.\* So, many an old festival, custom or rite, appears to have renewed its youth by a change of name, and as our trust in human progress would prompt us to believe, at least a partial change of significance;† yet it must be acknowledged that the very best signs of advancement are probably not to be looked for in just this line of evidence, and that too often the persistence of an old formality under a new name means not progress, but decadence. Still there is some meaning in the fact that the old must change its *apparent* import, in order to retain its place. It is thus shown that every "earthen vessel" must at least seem to be refilled at intervals from a fresh fountain, or else become loathsome and neglected.

From the general tenor of the facts now adduced, it may be inferred that man's invention has always been at work to find appropriate modes of utterance of the life within; the result being an ever-advancing approximation to the wants of ever-advancing experience. If this be correct, there can properly be no fixed standard form of enunciation of thought or sentiment; and antique formularies, as vehicles of present ideas, are especially liable to objection, on the score that, taken strictly in their original sense, they may involve obsolete notions.

It likewise appears from what the discussion has disclosed, that there cannot be any reasonable insurance of a real communication

\* Charles Reade. *The Cloister and the Hearth*, p. 327.

† Charles Reade (*Ibid.*) puts in the mouth of the "*Fra Colonna*" the assertion, that "Our infant baptism is Persian, with the font, and the signing of the child's brow;" as well as that "Our holy water is pagan, and all its uses."

of an idea or influence through symbolic act, rite, or word-formula, irrespective of the modal relations of the parties concerned.

It was designed to consider the liability to error under one or more heads, in addition to those now adverted to; but the extent which this paper has already attained, leaves room for no more than a brief glance at them. One of these considerations pertains to what may, for want of a better name, be called *mental preoccupation*.

From earliest childhood persons are imbibing from parents, teachers, and other sources, sentiments and dogmas, the grounds of which they never search into. The sub-conscious process by which they grow to these ways of thinking, is, perhaps, for the most part, a healthy one. At all events it seems to be the only one, under the present dispensation, by which any considerable degree of culture can be realized in the brief life of an individual. Childhood, at least, would make slow progress in education if it could believe no farther than it could demonstrate; and even youth and manhood would labor under serious disadvantages, on the same condition. Still the virtue of docility can, no doubt, like every other, be turned to a wrong account, in certain respects. If what *first comes*, under the guise of truth, is *first received*, there is danger that the real truth may afterwards be shut out at the instigation of the pre-ensconced pretender. The man who is thoroughly persuaded that the image which he worships really "fell down from Jupiter," will be slow to admit the right of competition with so venerable an object. May it be ventured here to suggest, that even where the old belief cannot be shown to be superstitious, there may still be reason for giving attention to a competing theory? The truth will not be overthrown by the mere thought of an error; nor, on the other hand, is a "holy horror" for a new hypothesis, the greatest proof of its inanity. The old notion that if a ghost is spoken to it will vanish, has some applicability to all phantoms. A hospitable and urbane treatment of them might often be the readiest mode of dissipating them; while standing in a defensive attitude on the narrow assumption of preconceived opinion, may, in the end, prove to be standing on a failing position.

Where, then, is the wisdom of shutting out the freest discussion

of the scientific topics of the day? And since no Divine oracle has in unmistakable language informed us, for instance, how matter has come to exist, why should one be bound to the mere human dogma of creation from nothing? and what harm in considering the question, whether there be not present in the purest known space living forces which might, by some relative change, assume tangibility, as the cloud is born of mixing masses of apparently pure air? Indeed, the persons who now give a cautious, yet friendly reception to some of the reputed heresies of science, which most likely are at best truths in disguise, may in the end be set down with those who have "entertained angels unawares."

As a final point, we may notice what may be designated as a liability to error from comparison. We have already had occasion to observe that thought progresses, not exclusively in a uniserial manner, but by a certain synchronal multiformity. Even the same series may be in two or more coexistent stages; as when a speaker thinks ahead of his speaking, and yet notes carefully his own utterance; or when one reads, keeping his eye a few words, or at least a few syllables, in advance of what he is vocalizing. In writing, the double process may involve a wider separation; and it has been observed that men in their writing sometimes mix in words, or parts of them, belonging some distance ahead. Another phase of simultaneous progress is seen in the ordinary school-curriculum, which carries on several studies at once; and here, too, there is opportunity for the student to show inequality of advancement on the different lines. Any one, however, can see the manifest impropriety of taking the comparative progress of any single student in different studies as furnishing a criterion of either the comparative value or the proportional difficulty of the studies in question; and yet this improper mode of judging is indulged in more or less every day by the student himself.

Still truer is it that mankind at large move on many lines of progress, and move unequally. We often hear of an individual's having lived before his time; and the same thing may occur with a nation or part of a nation. A more complicated state of the case may be that one community gets in advance in one particular, and another in a different respect. To add to even this confusion, general belief has it that not all movement is to be classed as either



progressive or regressive, but that there is such a thing as a genuine *digression*: and to this last category, as being easy of conception, many find it convenient to relegate a large share of human activity. The resultant weaving together of the once reasonable, the now reasonable, the to become reasonable, and the always absurd, forms a network not so easily unraveled. Still, the general fact being that every one is inclined to pass judgment upon his fellows, and that almost every one prefers his own position as the standpoint to judge from, many false apprehensions are likely to arise in men's mutual views of each other. One will look upon another as wild, fanatical, neglectful of historical precedents; while the latter will judge the former to be extra-conservative, living in a by-gone age.

Neither of these judgments, of course, is necessarily just. It is intrinsically possible that one may live and think after an antique model as earnestly as did the heroic men of old. To put the case strongly, the aboriginal American could, at the time of the discovery of this continent, wield his stone hatchet just as effectively as could the stone-man of Europe in his day.

On the other hand, spiritual or scientific enterprise, venturing out beyond all the land-marks of history, and braving all the conservatism of the time, need be thought no more visionary or reprehensible than the bold schemes which in the historic centuries made men of record. Must it not be admitted as at least possible, that the radical religionist or scientist of the present *may* have a work before him as legitimate as had Abraham or Moses, Columbus or Copernicus?

On the whole, then, by showing a larger willingness to discover all the truth they can in each other, and by putting the most charitable construction upon what they mutually esteem to be each other's errors, men would manifest a fuller appreciation of the great fact that in the fallible human mind truth and error are not to be looked for in a state of absolute separation; and in this manifestation would show themselves wiser. Signs of improvement in this regard are, indeed, already appearing in almost every direction; giving promise of a more consistent and effectual working of reason for the true accomplishment of its mission.



**ART. VII.—THE OLD LECTIONARIA OF THE CHURCH,  
AND THE BREVIARY.**

IN our preceding article we had occasion to remark that the early church saw in the Scriptural account of creation a vast symbol of spiritual generation in the sacrament of baptism; and that Tertullian was so firmly convinced that the mystery of the incoming of the supernatural world must illustrate, and, indeed, underlie that of the natural, as to use the type with bold, polemic daring in his defense of baptism. We may now remark that this is but one example of the extent to which the so-called allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures was carried by the early church. It was almost the universal practice. Only by means of such interpretation do the selections, in most cases, show their fitness for the season with which they are connected.

Many, no doubt, will make this a serious objection, not to the principle guiding the selection, but to the passages selected, because forced into their place by what they regard a wrong interpretation. What, they ask, has the opening record of Genesis to do with baptism, or regeneration, or recreation in Christ Jesus? Such passages would be more fitting for a preface for some scientific lecture on cosmogony. What has the deluge to do with baptism or the resurrection? What has the escape from Egypt to do with spiritual mysteries of delivering grace? We are quite willing, say they, to acknowledge that we have interesting and important historical facts here, which we can study and profit by, without indulging in excursions of fancy to realms of mysteries unseen and unknown.

We shall not, at this point, attempt to defend the method of interpretation so universally employed by the greatest teachers of the Church. We will but briefly refer to that which seems to have forced the mind of the church in such direction and which we think deserves most earnest consideration.

The Scriptures were regarded as the *word of God*, having their source in the spiritual world, and reaching down into the natural world for purposes of revelation, and therefore designedly making

the natural an enshrinement of the spiritual, which, from the original relation of the two, was felt to be possible. The natural in the Scriptures, whether of a physical or historical character, by the very use thus made of it by the spiritual, was felt to be lifted out of its own order into type and symbol, and sacramental correspondence, much after the same manner as water in baptism, or bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Indeed the whole of Scripture was viewed as a vast sacrament of the unseen spiritual realities of that sphere from which it properly proceeded. In such form it was an outflow of the divine. The inner and real sense of the word, therefore, as divine, required for its recognition, it was felt, something quite distinct from mere grammatical and historical investigation. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and the spiritual discernment here was regarded as just this power of seeing, in and through the natural, the spiritual which, after all, was the real and only thing to be revealed, and which, for this end and no other, subordinated the natural to its own higher use, by bringing it back to the spiritual to which, in the divine mind, it was originally related, or rather perhaps co-related. In other words, the spiritual has its counterpart in the natural throughout, and the Word joins the two in the work of revealing the divine, and this conjunction is that which the allegorical method of interpretation sought to grasp.

We cannot at once therefore cast this aside, calling it fanciful and absurd; nor can we think that the merely literal, by careful disjunction from the spiritual, can give us any revelation of the heavenly. The effort must be to seize the conjunction of the two. Here there is room for serious mistakes, blunders of apprehension; but it is quite remarkable that the allegorical school of interpretation always showed itself more free from heretical bias than any other, and drew to itself the very highest theological genius of the church.

We are now prepared to continue our examination of the selections indicated in our previous article, beginning with the fifth (Isaiah lv. 1-11). Here Christ is presented as the fountain of living waters and the source of all spiritual nourishment; and all are freely challenged to come unto Him. The whole passage may be regarded as the call of Christ to faith and spiritual activity. The

word of God, as spirit and life, descends from heaven as rain and snow, watering and refreshing the life of humanity, accomplishing the regeneration and glorification of those who hear and receive it. No passage could have been selected more befitting the service for which it was chosen. It may be well to remark here, in reference to the opening verses of the chapter, that in the Western Church there was a custom of giving wine and milk to those just baptized, and in the Eastern Church, milk and honey. S. Jerome, among others, mentions this in his commentary on Isaiah, ("*Mos ac typus in Occidentis Ecclesiis hodie usque servatur, ut renatis in Christo vinum lacque tribuatur.*")

The sixth selection has very much the character of the fifth and needs, therefore, no comment.

The seventh selection (Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-14), contains the remarkable vision of the prophet, when, carried away in the Spirit of the Lord and set down in the valley full of dry bones, he was commanded to prophesy upon the bones; and when by the breath, coming from the four winds, the bones revived and the slain were made to live. The vision is interpreted for the prophet, and the interpretation takes in a wide scope of prophecy in the words "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And I shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

It is vain to confine a vision of such character as this merely to a captive condition of God's people in a temporal or historical view, out of which they are providentially delivered. Every historical captivity of God's people holds within itself a reference to a more profound and spiritual captivity, and to a deliverance also that reaches infinitely beyond what may be regarded as the natural deliverance. The inner spiritual sense and meaning of the vision is no doubt to be found in Christ, who breathes forth his Spirit, regenerating, sanctifying and glorifying his people, releasing them from the captivity of hell, and translating them into the kingdom of everlasting life and light. What better theme for solemn medi-

tation and profitable reflection could engage the Christian heart during the vigil of Easter or Pentecost? It harmonizes perfectly with the whole services challenging the attention of God's people.

The eighth section (Isaiah, iv.), is peculiar and somewhat difficult to characterize. The chapter begins, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Only as we bring into view the old interpretation of this passage, the spiritual inner meaning which was supposed to be lodged or conjoined with the literal sense, does it seem to have any fitness whatever for the season to which it is assigned. The hidden sense of this passage, according to S. Jerome, is this: The sevenfold graces of the Holy Spirit seize upon Jesus, because no one else could be found in whom they could take up their eternal habitation, or out from whom they could properly flow forth into the world. Having mentioned the literal sense, S. Jerome writes: "*Hoc secundum literam. Cæterum in adventu Domini Salvatoris, septem mulieres, id est, septem gratiæ Spiritus sancti, apprehendent Jesum, quem multo tempore desideraverant, quia nullum alium potuerant invenire, in quo æterna statione requiescerent.*" This interpretation was sufficiently general to be introduced into one of the hymns of Adam de St. Victor:

"Umbra septem mulierum,  
Figurarum ipsum verum,  
Idem ipse forma rerum,  
Septiformis Spiritus."

Gautier, Vol. 1, 157.

So subsequently in the chapter, Christ washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion, *i. e.* he cleanses by the washing of regeneration, baptizing with the Holy Ghost and fire. The early church seemed on every hand to suppose that the spiritual, which the word of God uttered in and through the prophets, could not be other than the spiritual as having its source and substance in Christ. The Old Fathers hesitated not to bring the two together, as necessarily belonging to each other. To them the revelation in nature and in Scripture was throughout Messianic, and could not be otherwise, for only from Christ could there be any outflow of the spiritual for the world or for the Scriptures. Without such

a conception as this their method of interpretation must be viewed as mere fancy work, perfectly arbitrary, and unsettled, and worthless. The tendency of the present day seems to be to begin with the merely material or physical and ascend to the spiritual, which may be the proper method of scientific reason; but the reason of faith among the old divines pursued the reverse process, and saw the spiritual reaching down and outward to its ultimates in nature, and recognized therefore in the revealing word of God such a use of nature as would call into view the substantial spiritual for spiritual discernment. It must be acknowledged that while science may strive to go from flesh up to the word, it should not deny the possibility of the faith process, which sees the Word *made flesh* and dwelling among us. So much we have felt to be necessary, in reference to the almost universal method of the Fathers in handling the Scriptures.

Time fails us to examine the selection farther, nor is it necessary. Enough has been said to make apparent the principle which guided the selections of the old Lectionaria, and this is the main object we have had in view.

We wish, however, to add something more in reference to the educational power involved in such a system of scriptural selections for study in our Sunday-schools.

How much must an earnest pastor feel crippled and hindered, if, while he is feeding the flock entrusted to his care, a large portion of his congregation, Sunday after Sunday, is virtually disconnected from the main service of the sanctuary, in lessons of scripture, in hymns, in prayers, and indeed in the whole atmosphere of worship! He may see them moving in quite an opposite system of discipline, without any outward collision it may be, but with what is far worse, an inward diremption of thought, a tearing apart of the spiritual meditations of the Lord's day, a dispersion of tongues throughout the whole work of the soul's edification.

Take for example the season of Easter. Here the natural season even forms one of the chords of the festal joy.

"Mundi renovatio  
Nova parit gaudia,  
Resurgente Domino  
Conresurgent omnia."

The whole service of the Church is of course moulded by the great

festival theme. The hymns, the prayers, and the selections of scripture are of necessity made to revolve around the central pascal glory. The season even reaches out into the sportive habits of the household, and the children, with their colored eggs, seem to have caught some straying beam from the effulgent mystery. Now in the midst of all this, the Sunday-school convenes, and moves forward in a line of instruction and devotion, entirely separate and disconnected. It is studying the geography of Palestine, sounding the depths of the Dead Sea, tracing out the successive journeys of St. Paul, singing some hymn, the sentiment and music of which would do for a pic-nic party perhaps, and all this in the interest of edification. Of course this is an extreme case; yet no doubt of most frequent occurrence.

It may be said, however, that if we do away with Easter, the whole difficulty will be removed. If we have no Christmas, no Good Friday, no Easter, no Pentecost, no Church Year with its papistical order, as it is sometimes called, then all this trouble is done with, and we can go revolving around the sun, having January and February and March lessons, and so on, without any chance of conflict, if the pastor will but reasonably accommodate himself to this partial sun-worship. The mysteries of Christ's nativity, suffering, death, resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost we have, it is true, but not fixed for this time or that time, or indeed to any time at all. But is the order immaterial here? Can you begin in the middle of Geometry and move each way with equal benefit to the student, whose reason is to apprehend the study? Is there no method in the Revelation itself, as in the Creed, and in the Canon of Scripture? The Church Year is not an aggregation of single times. It is the organic order of the Divine revelation filling out the cycle of a year, and so related to the natural year as to bring into view to the best advantage the correspondence between the spiritual and natural.

Shall the Church be indifferent to the great mission of teaching the world, and let the whole matter of Scriptural instruction atomize itself according to the individual caprice of her ten thousand ministers? The church year is not a question of ritualism, nor a matter of conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants, nor a subject of contest between High Church and Low Church. It has

to do with the office of the ministry as such, in its function of unfolding the revelation of the Divine in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Its order and sense will stand or fall with the Apostles' Creed, in which it is rooted throughout, where Christ is made the determining centre, the Alpha and Omega, the express image of God's person, the brightness of God's glory, the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

We have no interest in the Church Year under any other view. If it marks not the orbit of the Sun of the Spiritual world, from whose light and heat we draw our entire supply of life-power, the very substance of our being in God, the possibility of our subsistence in time and in eternity, we care not how soon it may give place to another order entirely. All controversy, which has not for its aim a clearer and more steady view of Christ as the illuminating centre of the whole of Scripture as the very substance of the Word of God, wherever we have that word, and of all the means of grace, is in our view an abomination of desolation.

E. E. H.

---

#### ART. VIII.—NATURE AND GRACE—THE CONFLICT OF AGES.

BY REV. D. Y. HEISLER, A. M., MT. ALTO, PA.

THE Gospel of Christ contemplates the future conquest of the world. This naturally involves active aggression on the part of the Church, and a corresponding resistance and hostility on the part of the world. The truth, in fact, is to be propagated, and the kingdom of God established on earth, only amidst the perpetual conflict and struggle of opposing forces. This conflict, however, is not carried on between inside and outside forces only. The disturbing elements of Nature and of natural corruption exist, also, and are active within the sacred enclosure. "From the days of John the Baptist until now," says the blessed Saviour, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

This violence is not, as has sometimes been imagined, sanctioned by our Saviour, and recognized as something legitimate and right.



Rather it designates the unnatural and carnal way in which a debased and sensuous generation sought to appropriate to themselves the kingdom of God and its inestimable blessings. The crude and turbulent impulses of Nature were evidently substituted for the gracious provisions of the Gospel, as it then stood; and consequently the conversion of the ingathering multitudes was very imperfect and ephemeral. Hence the necessary and violent recoil which these early and over-zealous converts experienced when they came into closer contact with the Person and ministry of the meek and lowly Saviour—the immaculate Son of Mary. This first and violent attempt to storm the citadel of God, and appropriate the “kingdom of heaven” with its supernatural privileges and blessings, was but the rising shadow and prophecy of that endless series of similar attempts that should afterwards be witnessed in connection with the onward movements and spiritual progress of the Church militant. To trace the perpetual workings of this carnal spirit, with its endless array of hostile forces in the progress of God’s kingdom, and to point out the relation it sustains to this supernatural order, will be the object of this paper.

Jesus Christ came confessedly to “make all things new.” This regenerating process necessitated an early and fierce conflict with the powers of evil that met Him in the form of a sensuous and degenerate Judaism—a perpetual collision with that blind and fatal inmixing of worldly and demoralizing elements with the higher and holier elements of the Divine economy. Thus the earthly life of Christ was eventually sacrificed to the combined influence of a corrupt Judaism and a persecuting Paganism. In this terrible conflict and its fatal issue the principle of evil apparently triumphed; but the triumph of the wicked is of short duration and little account. Jesus, as the “Prince of life”—the Saviour of the world—triumphed in the midst of death, and, in the agonies of the cross, laid the foundation of a spiritual and indestructible kingdom. The atoning death of Christ was at once both the binding together of earth and heaven, and the effectual introduction of Divine and saving elements into the stream of human life and human history. Hence the violent death which ended the earthly career of our Divine Redeemer shook the kingdom of darkness to its very centre, and achieved a perpetual victory over the

enemy of our fallen race. The one perennial offering of Christ on the Cross, mediated by the wickedness of men, and designed for the destruction of His cause, constitutes the firm basis of the Church on earth, and gives assurance that in due time "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ."

When the work of human redemption was consummated on the Cross, and divinely sanctioned and sealed by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the apostles and their associates in the kingdom of God were commissioned to go forth in the name of the Crucified One, and to continue the work commenced in His own Person and ministry. They built upon the same foundation; and, in so building, they encountered like hostile forces—the same earthly elements. They entered the conflict armed with divine powers and prerogatives; and, in the full consciousness of their higher endowments, went forth "conquering and to conquer." Being divinely illuminated they instinctively discerned the presence and fatal workings of the evil, and uniformly succeeded in mastering these hostile forces and assimilating them to the purer elements that enter into the kingdom of God. To what extent the corrupt and demoralizing spirit of the world—of unregenerate nature—was present, is seen in the extensive prevalence of the Judaizing tendencies, on the one hand, and of the docetic, speculative, or philosophizing tendencies of a semi-Christianized Paganism on the other hand. By this latter even the cardinal doctrine of the resurrection of the body was denied; while the sensuous spirit of the former sought to reduce the Divine Redeemer to the condition of a Jewish prince. To these several hostile tendencies the Apostles and early disciples opposed the doctrines of grace—the preaching of "Christ and Him crucified."

The aggressive policy of conquest and extension, inaugurated by the holy Apostles and their associates, was naturally adopted, also, and thus perpetuated by their successors in office. Their task, however, was not so easy an one as that of their immediate and divinely inspired predecessors. When the startling effects of the first shock, which Judaism and Paganism had received, had silently passed away, and things were returning again to their ordinary level, room was once more made for the incoming and free opera-

tion of the natural and perverse elements of the world. The Gospel, indeed, had made a deep and permanent impression on society : but against this progress or work of grace, the spirit of the world rebounded with redoubled force from its partial defect. Along with this natural rebound of earthly elements and their fatal inworking upon the kingdom of God, there came, also, upon the struggling Church the more potent and formidable forces of an intellectual foe. Philosophy, in the form of Neo-platonism, early arose within the bosom of the Church, and exerted its baneful influence on its doctrines and precepts. The Person of Christ, especially, his earthly life, doctrines, miracles, death, and resurrection, all came successively within the range of these bold and reckless speculations of the new philosophy. The future destiny of the saints, the resurrection of the body, and the nature of their existence in the world to come, as well as the origin and destiny of the world as a whole, also came under review, and were made to bend to the dictates of unenlightened reason and its lawless speculations. The extensive perversion of the doctrines of the Church necessitated the more careful study of the Scriptures, and the fuller and more accurate defining of doctrinal points, and so the gradual formation of the early creeds.

The state of the Church was truly critical ; but her distress naturally also suggested the needed remedy. The extensive prevalence of error called forth correspondingly earnest and successful efforts for its suppression. The Gospel of Christ was found to be fully equal to the exigencies of the times. That Divine wisdom which had guided the earliest heralds of the cross, and had led them into all truth, also directed the steps of all subsequent workers in the kingdom of God. Indeed the very misfortunes of the Church—the fierce opposition of the world, and the treachery of pretended friends and their perverse and unscriptural teachings—aided in developing the spiritual resources and extraordinary endowments of the believing portion of her membership. To this very day we enjoy the sweet and precious fruits of those heroic struggles of the early Church. The dark night of heresy and schism, occasioned by these profane speculations, was succeeded by the dawn and coming glory of a brighter day. The Gospel of Christ triumphed alike over the corruptions of the world and

the silly dreams and extravagant speculations of philosophy "falsely so called." But this has reference only to one side of the general evil. The effect of these absurd speculations on the practical life of the Church was equally disastrous. Docetic ideas and legions of visionary notions in the sphere of doctrine necessarily led to asceticism in practical life and conduct. Or, if these vain speculations did not originate, they at least encouraged and greatly strengthened that gloomy and forbidding view of life which afterwards led to such disastrous results. Christians were inclined to depreciate the world and its stern realities, and seek shelter, quietude, and opportunities for devotion, in the seclusion of forests and the unbroken solitude of dens and caves of the mountains. And naturally so; for if matter was deemed essentially evil, and escape from its deteriorating influence was the surest way to the cultivation of the higher life, then it was indeed highly meritorious and praiseworthy to flee from the bustle and confusion of the outside world, and to seek refuge and safety in retirement.

Such, in fact, was the direct practical effect which that dismal view of the world, and its relation to the higher life, had upon the multitude. Hence the extravagant estimate placed on the monastic profession and its dread austerities. Here then was another and more practical array of hostile elements to be met and mastered by the Gospel of the grace of God—elements that must either be subdued or prove disastrous to the cause of Christ. The Gospel of the kingdom, looking forward to the complete inward and outward conquest of the world, must needs come in living contact with its corrupt and destructive principles. And the legitimate bearers of these heavenly powers—the powers designed for the salvation of the world—were the disciples of Christ. These are "the light of the world, and the salt of the earth." Every member of the Church, therefore, that yielded to the charm of that ascetic spirit, and withdrew from the conflict of life, detracted just so much from the general current of Christian influence and spiritual power, which, in the circumstances, were needed to leaven the corrupting and heaving mass of human life.

When the dictates of duty and the instincts of nature come in conflict—when the operations and demands of divine grace and the motions of the flesh, in any form, stand opposed to each other,

the higher claims of the Gospel must in all cases be responded to and obeyed. But in the case before us the preference was mostly given to the supposed claims of private devotion and individual or personal convenience. Retirement from the contagious influences of a wicked and corrupt world, and from the painful struggles of active life, was generally preferred, and even regarded as highly meritorious in the sight of God, by many of the disciples at that extraordinary period of the Church's history. But was not this practically to betray the cause of Christ, and to sacrifice duty to ease—the claims of the Gospel to the dictates of nature?

But this sensuous spirit within the bosom of the Church showed itself in another and still more objectional form—in that, namely, of a blind and senseless devotion to the sainted dead. Those heroes of faith, especially, who had suffered the agonies of martyrdom in the cause of Christ, excited the admiration and elicited the warmest devotions of the vulgar crowd. That these faithful confessors and champions in the cause of Christ should be objects of the highest regard, is not at all strange, and that some exhibitions of inordinate devotion to their persons, and extravagant laudation of their superior virtues should occur, might naturally be expected. Such regard for heroism, especially moral heroism, is found among all nations, ancient and modern. That the same should be the case with the early Christians is therefore perfectly natural; but that this merited regard for the sainted dead, and high admiration for their heroic faith and joyous confession, in prison and at the stake, should, by the common people, be carried to such extravagant lengths, and be sanctioned and applauded by their spiritual guides, is utterly inconceivable except on the supposition that the grace of the Gospel yielded for the time being to the blind impulses of unregenerate nature. This sensuous spirit, which showed itself so potent and overwhelmingly effective in that early age of the Church, still lives, and, looming down through the ages, continues to throw its dark and ominous shadow over a large and influential portion of the Christian world. Its form may vary greatly, but its life and genius are the same. We can readily discern this dangerous spirit, as it prevails especially in Roman Catholic countries, and silently works its way to the hearts and into the devotions of the common people. Under the most genial and enticing forms it

entwines itself around the hearts, and mingles with the affections of the worshipers as they kneel around the altar and offer up their daily and weekly devotions to the blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, without being willing to say that this strange fire, kindled upon the altar of the heart, does so far vitiate the devotions of God's people as to render them unacceptable to Him, we may, at least, confidently assert that any foreign matter, or discordant ingredients whatever, mingling with our worship, must, in the nature of the case, render it less pure and appropriate than it would otherwise be—that is, if it were wholly free from these foreign and disturbing elements.

There are two maxims which we consider perfectly true, and susceptible of universal application; the one is—that history continually repeats itself, and the other—that the course of history proceeds in zigzag lines. Both maxims may be applied to the view above taken of the past history of the Church, or of the progress of the Gospel in the world. Nature and grace, though under vastly different forms, proceed in parallel lines down the stream of history, and appear in continual conflict, alternately yielding the one to the superior force of the other. We are, therefore, warranted to look for the reappearance continually of the same general heresies in the different periods of the Church's history. In the more modern period of the Church, indeed, the evils which we have already had under review, may assume somewhat different aspects; but, as regards their main features, they will be the same. Both Grace and Nature operate substantially in the same way, in every age and among all classes of people.

Let us try to illustrate this thought. During the Apostolic period, the simple doctrine of "Christ and Him crucified," was preached. Little attention was paid to particular doctrinal statements, except in so far as the correction of wrong or imperfect apprehensions of particular points of doctrine became necessary from time to time. These corrections or more exact doctrinal statements are found scattered throughout the Epistles and other writings of the Apostles. This primitive mode of preaching Christ as the Redeemer of the world continued for some considerable time after the inspired teachers had passed from the stage of action. When,



however, the peace of the Church was disturbed, and its safety threatened, then the early Fathers carefully formulated the acknowledged doctrines of the Church, and made adherence to them, on the part of teachers, obligatory.

So when, in the sixteenth century, the spirit of Christian liberty struggled into existence, and rose up in opposition to the spirit of bondage, which, like an incubus, lay upon the souls of men, it was natural that the emancipated spirit should revel in the comforting doctrine of the Cross—of the forgiveness of sin, and of justification by faith in the blood of Christ. This was enough for the time being. Soon, however, the exigencies of the case called for more—for the exact formulation of the doctrines of grace as then apprehended. Hence it became necessary that the intellectual faculties, as well as the simple exercise of faith, should come into play. The Reformers were compelled to state distinctly what were the accepted doctrines of grace as distinguished from the miserable excrescences of a depraved human nature. And this rational demand became the more imperative because of the wild and fanatical spirit which arose almost simultaneously with the reformatory movement, and occasioned such manifold disturbances. The kingdom of heaven was doomed once more to suffer violence, and the violent took it by force. As in the earlier ages, so here, also, there arose a motley crowd of rude and turbulent spirits, who, by their disorderly conduct, endangered the peace of the Church, and even threatened its very existence. Against the intemperate zeal and revolutionary proceedings, fomented by this evil spirit, the leaders of the reformatory movement most earnestly protested, and, by their wisdom and prudence, succeeded, in part at least, to curb its violence and thus prevent its desolating ravages. Even at the very dawn of the Reformation this violent ebullition of frenzied feeling, and the mighty inworking of unregenerate nature were experienced and seen to mar the beautiful work of Divine grace.

These unhappy disturbances were occasioned by the presence and operation of low, sensuous elements—the ebullitions of a wild and fanatical spirit. The Church, however, was destined soon to experience evils of a more serious nature. Gradually the simple preaching of the cross, and the calm and accurate formulation of doctrinal statements, yielded to the din of war—the clash of fierce



partisan strife and angry theological discussions. Party lines were being more closely drawn; and the dry, bony, and unyielding doctrinal systems rigidly enforced to the injury and annoyance of many good and earnest men. Compliance with the stern ecclesiastical enactments of the times was strictly enforced. During the dreary length of a whole century or more this harsh and merciless régime of a stiff and inflexible orthodoxy continued to afflict the struggling Church. Under its sway the mild and genial spirit of Christian piety was forced, in many cases, to succumb to the dictates of a cold and dreary intellectualism; while the teachings of the blessed Gospel itself were twisted and tortured into every imaginable shape, to suit the peculiar whims of stern and bigoted ecclesiastical zealots. No wonder that the free spirit of the gospel should rise up and rebel against this oppressive system, especially when the earnest inner life which distinguished the Reformers and their immediate successors, had well-nigh disappeared, and left the Church next to a lifeless corpse.

This deplorable state of the Church in that age of spiritual stagnation and moribund confessionalism, called forth an equally dangerous extreme on the opposite side—namely Pietism. As over against the cold and lifeless objectivism then prevailing, the pietists very properly insisted on subjective religion—the inner life of the soul. So far as this movement, in the seventeenth century, was a protest against a lifeless formalism in the Church, it was perfectly legitimate; but, as it usually happens in such cases, the movement soon degenerated into a species of gloomy fanaticism, and fomented endless disorders in the Church at the time. The pious Spener and his genial companions at first controlled and held in check this movement, and, for some time, kept it within the bounds of reason and sobriety. But others, possessed of a more ardent temperament, and hurried along by the wild spirit of the age, could not brook restraint, and soon carried things to the most extravagant lengths—ending in all sorts of excess. Grace yielded to the power of nature under its most dangerous and ungovernable form. A gloomy fanaticism usurped the place of rational piety, and a stubborn willfulness, often rude and unyielding, effectually displaced the mild and merciful spirit of the Gospel. Soon the bitter fruits of this excessively subjective movement openly appeared. The spirit of

the age, unwilling any longer to submit to wholesome restraint, and terribly demoralized by the absence of a living and rational piety in the Church, now boldly launched forth and landed in the cold and dreary regions of a supremely *irrational* Rationalism. Here truly the natural and perverted reason had full and undisputed sway. The authority of Divine Revelation was utterly repudiated except in so far as it admitted of a rational interpretation in the low and jejune sense of these radical reformers of the Church and her doctrines. During one more long and dreary century the Church was fearfully oppressed, and compelled to submit to the stern and heartless regime of the bald and now almost universally enthroned abstract understanding. The supernatural was required to yield to the authority of the natural—the Divine to the human!

Blessed be God that a better and brighter day has dawned upon the Church of Europe. A more lovely and genial piety now occupies the place of the rude rationalistic spirit which, until but half a century ago, afflicted the poor, bleeding churches of the fatherland. Long may they continue to enjoy the blessed liberty wherewith Christ has made them free!

Leaving the foreign churches for the present, we shall turn our attention to what is transpiring nearer home. Here we find substantially the same processes going forward as in the churches abroad, only under somewhat different aspects. The elements of our American piety have all been imported from the old country during the last few centuries. The numerous emigrants from the continent of Europe, as well as from Great Britain, would naturally bring with them the same form of Christianity to which they had been accustomed in their former homes. Thus the religious ideas and practices of the Old World would naturally be transferred to their homes in the New. May we not, then, suppose that from these similar religious elements precisely the same practical results will be evolved, here as there, except in so far as they may be incidentally affected by modifying influences brought to bear upon them from without. This fact would naturally lead us to expect, the same fruits to appear in this country as were seen to flow from these principles on the soil of Europe. While, therefore, the grace of God might be expected to work out all the blessed results which were seen to accompany the preaching of the Gospel and

the administration of the holy sacraments in the Old World, we would be warranted to look, also, for the certain appearance of the tares—the evil fruits—which there sprung from the in-mixing of any sinful, carnal, or earthly elements.

This expectation would be perfectly natural under the circumstances. While, then, we are allowed to rejoice in the prosperity of the Church in this country, we should not be unmindful of the dangers which may threaten it, especially in the future. To many good and earnest men, as is well known, the present appearance of things is not just the most promising. Our American Christianity is mainly remarkable for its prevaillingly subjective character, for its excessive freedom, and its independence of the outward means of grace—in other words, for its unchurchly and unsacramental character. Indeed, the latter characteristics are very generally regarded with feelings of profound suspicion. The boasted *superiority* of our popular piety confessedly consists, to a very large extent, in its spiritualistic and intensely subjective character—its independence of outward forms. Some good men, indeed, regard this peculiarity as its highest recommendation. Other men equally good, we think, regard the matter in question in an exactly opposite light.

Look at the present religious status of this country. The interests of religion are carried forward almost exclusively on what may be termed the high-pressure system—that is by the use of special and extraordinary means, and in connection with a large amount of excitement or animal feeling. This, we think, can be asserted without the least injustice to the parties implicated. Indeed, many very excellent men would take it as an insult to be told that this was not the best or even *only* mode of advancing successfully the cause and kingdom of Christ in the world. The free and almost universal use of the so-called "ANXIOUS-BENCH" and other kindred appliances, in conducting religious meetings—especially those usually called "revival meetings"—will, we think, fully justify the assertion which we have ventured to make. Now, without presuming to sit in judgment upon this particular system of operations, we may confidently assert that in meetings of this character the success depends very largely upon the operation of purely human elements—in some cases almost wholly so. The

preaching, the praying, and the singing are generally of such a character as strongly to affect and move the feelings, and to create an unnatural excitement. The purely natural elements come in, and occupy, to a large extent, the place, and perform the functions which belong exclusively to the Divine Spirit. This is the most discouraging feature in this popular and bewitching system. The same peculiarity gave to the Pietism of the last and preceding century its attractive character, and clothed it for a time with such extraordinary power and popularity. But the very same peculiarity also contributed largely to its subsequent decline, and, in connection with the rationalistic tendencies of the age, conducted it fully into the current of that muddy and turbulent stream. Prof. Semler, who was among the latest representatives of Pietism, was also one of the earliest of the modern rationalists.

That our American New-measure piety, with its intensely subjective character, its generally low estimate of outward divine ordinances, and its disposition to lay so much stress upon feeling, is in great danger of running itself out into rationalistic tendencies, no one acquainted with the past history of the Church can possibly deny. So long, indeed, as the first glow of this species of piety continues unabated, there is not so much danger; but let a general decline of religious interest supervene, and the door is at once fully open for the intrusion of the enemy. The system of thought which underlies that species of piety is constitutionally weak and faulty, and has an innate tendency to run out into spiritual anarchy and lawlessness.

A moment's reflection on the past history of the American Churches will convince any one of the general correctness of our position. Puritanism was the predominant religion of the New England States. No one can for a moment question the earnest Christian character of those good men who settled that interesting portion of our country. They have always been justly regarded as among the most intelligent, pious, and enterprising portion of our population. Their zeal for the public welfare was always equal to their piety. Nothing, indeed, so far as we can see, could possibly be wanting to preserve New England Puritanism in its integrity down to the latest generations; and yet no portion of our country has suffered so much from the prevalence of rationalistic principles,

and aberrations of all descriptions, as New England. There may, indeed, be other causes calculated to account for this strange phenomenon; but, to our own mind, the excessively subjective character of their piety is abundantly sufficient for the extensive prevalence of rationalism, in the form, especially, of Unitarianism and kindred heresies.

Some good and pious people may perhaps object to the freedom we have taken with several of our popular systems of religious belief and practice, from the fact that each one of the different phases of Christianity noticed has excellencies which we are bound to honor, and that with almost every system of religious faith are identified men of fine parts and excellent Christian character, whose feelings should be sacredly regarded. Most assuredly we are bound to recognize Christian piety wherever found, and to esteem and honor all the friends of Jesus, of every name. But this duty, confessedly important, does not debar us from being loyal to the truth; nor does it prevent us from sounding the alarm whenever we encounter error, or feel confident that there is danger at hand. We are bound to honor the TRUTH above everything else, and to maintain it at all hazards. No personal consideration whatever should induce us to shrink from any task which duty to God and His kingdom may impose upon us. To do so, knowingly, would betray an unpardonable weakness and criminal want of fidelity to the cause of truth and righteousness. Besides, we should not be so excessively sensitive on this point, as we ALL are alike subject to imperfections; and a confession and faithful exposure of our own infirmities may serve to shield others from danger, and save them from death. Of all the lessons which we learn, those acquired by the study of actual history are the most salutary and effective.

What, then, are the particular lessons to be derived from the present brief historical survey. Chiefly the following, namely, that, as in the case of individual Christians, so in reference to the whole Church or any single part of it, perfection is wholly out of the question; that wherever the grace of the blessed Gospel is operative, there, too, the corrupt elements of the "flesh" make themselves felt; that in each particular age of the church we find errors and sins peculiar to the circumstances of that age; that, generally speaking, where the Divine presence is most deeply felt, there also

the workings of evil are the most startling; and, finally, that our only safety, both as regards ourselves and the Church of God, lies in a prudent distrust of our own resources, and in close adherence to the blessed Gospel and its infallible teachings, seeking, at the same time, earnestly and believingly, the guidance of the Divine Spirit!

---

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

#### HYMNS FOR THE REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication Board, No. 907 Arch street.

This is the new selection of hymns prepared by a committee of the Eastern Synod, including what is now the Potomac Synod, of the Reformed Church. It was prepared by permission of the General Synod, which allowed the Church East and West to publish and use such selection in connection with their respective liturgies. It contains 486 hymns and 21 doxologies. The advantages which it possesses over the old hymn book are many. In that hymn book there is a number of hymns that are inferior and were seldom used. These are now left out. In place of them quite a number of first-class hymns are given that were not in the old book. Rock of Ages, O Sacred Head now wounded, Come ye Disconsolate, Jerusalem the Golden, and many other well-known hymns are here given which are not found in the old book. Besides, there are many excellent ones from the Latin-Church hymns that are consecrated by the ages. The one by Dr. Higbee, Thy glory Thou didst manifest, will live. We would suggest the omission of the italicizing of the two words in the 1st and 2d stanzas in the next edition, as being unusual in hymns. Dr. Harbaugh's hymn, Jesus! I live to Thee, is worthy the place it occupies also.

The arrangement according to the Church Year is a great improvement. It is a great convenience, as well as a guide for finding the proper hymns for any Sunday, while there may be full freedom in selecting at times from other portions, especially where the hymns are used during the week. We do not regard this as a final hymn book for the Reformed Church. It has defects as well as high virtues. But we feel persuaded that it meets a present want; and when the time comes, if it will come, when the whole Church itself wishes to unite in preparing a hymn book, we feel

assured that this will be one of the best helps. The committee deserve the thanks of the Church for their arduous labors and the success which has attended them.

**ADDITIONS TO SCHAFF'S DEUTSCHES GESANGBUCH.** Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston. J. Kohler. 1875.

These additional hymns are published in flexible covers, in two sizes, to suit the two editions of the hymn book. They include translations from several English hymns—Nearer, my God, to Thee, Rock of Ages, Just as I am, etc.

**ASSYRIAN DISCOVERIES:** An account of Explorations and Discoveries on the site of Nineveh, during 1873 and 1874. By George Smith, of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, Author of "History of Assurbanipal," etc., etc., with illustrations. New York. Scribner, Armstrong & Co. 1875.

This is a large-sized volume of about 450 pages, printed on the best paper and handsomely bound, in every way worthy, in mechanical execution, of the important contents which it presents to the public. The enterprise of making these explorations was started by the proprietors of the "Daily Telegraph" newspaper of London. It is hardly necessary to refer to the interest that attaches to the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, which, with the land of Palestine, furnishes traditions, history and monuments of the utmost importance, especially to the Christian world. "It is the home of man's earliest traditions, the place where Eden was supposed to have been; some of its cities are stated to be older than the Flood; it is the land of the Deluge and of the tower of Babel, and it is the birthplace of the great race of Israel, which has played so important a part in the religious history of the world."

The excavations on the sites of the buried cities of Assyria was commenced by M. Botta, French consul at Mosul in 1842. These were continued by Mr. Layard in 1845. Then came the decyphering of the inscriptions which have thrown so much light on the history, language, manners, and customs of ancient Assyria and Babylonia, by Sir Henry Rawlinson and others. The author of this interesting volume, made two visits to this Eastern country, and although the time spent was comparatively brief, yet he succeeded in making many interesting discoveries of inscriptions. These are given in this volume, accompanied with some fine illustrations. The legend of the Flood is remarkable in its coincidence with the account in the Bible. We merely add that while the work of examining and translating these inscriptions is the work of scholars only, yet the account of their discovery and the use made of them is of interest to the general reader, and this volume is pre-



pared in order to spread information and awaken interest in the work of extending these explorations.

**HOURS IN A LIBRARY:** By Leslie Stephen. New York. Scribner, Armstrong & Co. 1875.

A republication of Articles which have appeared in the "Cornhill Magazine," "Frazer's Magazine," and the "Fortnightly Review." They embrace chapters on De Foe's Novels, Richardson's Novels, Pope as a Moralist, Mr. Elwin's Edition of Pope, some words about Sir Walter Scott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Balzac's Novels, and De Quincey. The Magazines in which these essays first appeared furnish a guarantee of their literary merit. Nor does it detract at all from their interest that they are republished in this volume. Rather this also is a proof of their sterling value. They belong to literature, and are not affected by the changes of the times. The authors and writings they criticise live on in the world of literature, and will be studied and read with no less interest in years to come than in years past, for a true work of literature belongs to all time. So far as we have looked into these essays, they evince on the part of their author a mastery of his subject, and present a clear and forcible style. It is a suitable volume especially for the libraries of students and literary societies.

**THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND FIRST EMPIRE: AN HISTORICAL SKETCH.** By William O'Connor Morris, sometime scholar of Oriel College, Oxford. With an appendix upon the Bibliography of the subject and a course of study by Hon. Andrew D. White, LL. D., President of Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co.

Another volume of the series designated Epochs of History, to which we have referred in notices of former volumes of the same series.

Those who cannot take the time, or have not the desire, to read the volumes of Thiers, or to cypher out the hieroglyphics of what is called "the prose poem" of Carlyle, will find the subject presented here in small compass. The matter is worked up with great ability, so as to present the subject as a complete whole. The style is animated, and carries the reader along with increasing interest from the beginning to the close.

For the benefit of those who may wish to go into a more extensive study of the subject, President White furnishes a valuable Appendix and Bibliography, giving a list: 1. Of the general historical works; 2. Special and collateral treatises; 3. Historical essays and lectures; 4. Memoirs and correspondence; 5. Newspapers; 6. Illustrative material; 7. Maps. Then follow sketches of courses of reading. The more we see of this historical library

the more we are disposed to commend it. The volumes are presented in that beautiful style for which the house of Scribner, Armstrong & Co. is distinguished.

**SEEKING AND FINDING.** From the German. By Lewis Henry Steiner. Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication Board, 907 Arch street. 1875.

This work has already become widely known in the Reformed Church by its publication as a serial in the *Messenger*. It is eminently worthy of being issued now in book form. It gives, we think, a somewhat exceptional experience, but yet one from which much that is valuable may be learned by every one. Ordinarily the experience of Christian life flows in a more even and placid stream. Perhaps the wide separation between the spiritual condition at confirmation and that which followed in the subject of this volume, is more common in Germany, where all are confirmed at a certain age, than would be the case in the Protestant churches in this country. In this respect, the experience seems to be exceptional and abnormal. There ought to be an even unfolding of Christian experience from confirmation forward. But we know that with many this is not the case. Perhaps too much stress is laid on feeling, and here and there the experience seems somewhat sentimental.

But, with all, the book is deeply earnest, and all stress centres on the unfolding of the Christian life instead of worldly interests, as is too often the case with such works. It touches on the tender sentiment of love, but does not end in a marriage. The translation is all that might be expected from such an accurate and accomplished scholar as Dr. Steiner.

**A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE DUKE OF NORFOLK** on occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent Expostulation. By John Henry Newman, D. D., of the Oratory. New York: The Catholic Publication Society, 9 Warren street. 1875.

**THE VATICAN DECREES IN THEIR BEARING ON CIVIL ALLEGIANCE.** By Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster. New York: The Catholic Publication Society, 9 Warren street. 1875.

**THE TRUE AND THE FALSE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPES.** A controversial reply to Dr. Schulte. By Dr. Joseph Fessler, late Bishop of St. Polten, in Austria, and Secretary General of the Vatican Council. New York: The Catholic Publication Society, No. 9 Warren street. 1875.

Besides the above replies to Mr. Gladstone, which have been

sent to us by the publishers, there are, Bishop Ullathorne on the same subject, Bishop Vaughan on the same, Lord Robert Montagu on the same, etc., all published by the same Society. The number of replies is perhaps eighteen or twenty, all to Mr. Gladstone's first pamphlet. He has published another, answering his critics, to which there will no doubt be other rejoinders. The discussion is a very serious and earnest one, of marked ability, and conducted thus far in a gentlemanly and amiable spirit.

The author of the first pamphlet named is one of the first writers in the English language. He is one of the first minds of the age. He has a most kind and amiable spirit, and, as we think, too much of the spirit of Protestantism to feel fully at home in Ultramontaniam. He is eminently conscientious, and so simple and honest in stating his convictions that he exposes himself to attacks from Roman Catholics. His theory of conscience, we feel assured, is very far from squaring with the Jesuit theory, which now rules the Roman Catholic Church. So also he admits quite too much to please that Order. After going over the case of Honorius, "whose condemnation by anathema in the 6th Œcumenical Council," he grants, "is certainly a strong *prima facie* argument against the Pope's doctrinal infallibility," he concludes that "at the utmost, it only decides that Honorius in his own person was a heretic, which is inconsistent with no Catholic doctrine; but we may rather hope and believe that the anathema fell, not upon him, but upon his letters in their objective sense, he not intending personally what his letters legitimately expressed." His concessions in the case of Galileo and the St. Bartholomew massacre would hardly be acceptable to the *Catholic World*, published in New York. Indeed Dr. Newman's pamphlet has been pretty sharply criticised by the Roman Catholics themselves.

Archbishop Manning's pamphlet breathes a very different spirit. He is politician as well as churchman and theologian, not as vigorous a thinker as Newman, nor of such childlike spirit, but speaking as an executive with greater severity towards his opponents. Manning argues where Newman concedes. Dr. Fessler devotes the larger portion of his pamphlet to show that none of the historical examples brought forward by Schulte are included in the sphere of the Pope's infallibility.

We do not propose to go into a notice of this controversy at length, but merely add a few points, just as they come forward.

I. In regard to the Bull *unam sanctam* of Boniface VIII.

Dr. Manning employs a good deal of space, some twenty pages directly, to this Bull. He says, "I have affirmed that the relations of the Catholic Church to the Civil Powers are fixed primarily by the Divine constitution of the Church and of the Civil Society of men. But it is also true that these relations have been declared by

the Church in acts and decrees, *which are of infallible authority. Such, for instance, is the Bull of Boniface VIII., unam sanctam.*" We italicize as above. Then the writer goes on to defend the doctrines set forth in this Bull as the infallible teaching of the Church.

But, now, when Dr. Fessler comes to this subject in his criticism of Schulte, he maintains that there is only one sentence in this Bull which can be regarded as an infallible dogmatic definition, viz: the closing words: "And this we declare, we say, we define, and we pronounce, that it is necessary for the salvation of every human creature that he should be subject to the Roman Pontiff. These words, and only these words, are the definition *de fide* of the Bull *unam sanctam*. All the rest of the foregoing, after the very first words, which lay down an acknowledged article of faith as a basis, is a partly theological, partly canonical exposition of the relative positions of Church and State, made after the fashion of viewing such matters then in vogue; but it constitutes no dogmatic definition at all, &c."

This is the way Dr. Fessler answers the case of Boniface. But if he is right, then Dr. Manning does not seem to apprehend the case aright when he devotes so long an argument to support the whole of this Bull as an *ex cathedra* and infallible doctrine of the Pope. This is only one example to show that it requires great knowledge and skill of theologians to determine what is *ex cathedra* and infallible in the utterance of Popes, and that even they are not always agreed on the subject. This renders this doctrine of infallibility of but poor practical account for the millions of unlettered laymen.

For these millions of laymen a large portion of the teachings and definitions of the Church is a mere dead letter. And this shows the folly of adding the damnatory clause to all these decrees, beginning with the Athanasian Creed. There is, we know, a way of explaining that clause, as referring not to the detailed items of that creed, but to the faith as a whole which it embodies. But what then are we to make of all the *anathemas* affixed to the decrees of Councils, down to those of Trent and the Vatican? It may be said that all that is required of the people who never know what these decrees are, is, that they have a passive faith, that they do not contradict them. Well, then it is, after all, just about the same as if a Protestant would say, I believe all that is in the Bible, no matter whether he knows what is in it or not. This is a kind of faith, we grant, and has its value; but it is not the faith that saves, it is not the faith which apprehends Jesus Christ as the object of faith. Such dogmatic definitions are not the condition of salvation. The idea of condemning Pope Honorius I. to eternal condemnation because he thought (whether as an individual or *ex cathedra*) that there was only one energy or will in

Christ! How many Christians, who believe in Christ as the God-man, would be unable to tell what the doctrine of the Church is in regard to the two wills of Christ! Must they be anathematized for that?

II. There seems to be an effort in these pamphlets to explain away the meaning of the temporal power claimed by the Pope. But this cannot be done in the face of history. The iron rule enforced by the Papacy over the state during the middle ages appears on almost every page of their history. It was not merely the right to discipline a king, being a member of the Catholic Church, as well as a subject, if he sinned, that was exercised, but to depose him from office, to release his subjects from their allegiance, and give over his realm to a foreign invader. Just here the Ultramontane theory contradicts itself. That theory teaches that civil rulers receive their office from God through the people. Then the people only have the right, under certain circumstances, to take the office away. But the Popes have claimed and exercised the right, time and again, to depose civil rulers.

And what shall we say of the exegesis of Boniface VIII. when, in his Bull *unam sanctam*, he argues from Scripture in support of his theory of the two swords, that when Christ said to the disciples, "how many swords have ye?" and they replied, "two," He said "it is enough," the Saviour meant to teach that the Church has these two swords committed to her, the temporal and the spiritual, and should use them? Is that infallible interpretation? If so, then when Peter used a sword, and the Lord rebuked him, saying, they that take the sword shall perish by the sword, it must mean something too. Does it mean that when the Church attempts to use the sword of temporal power it shall perish by that sword?

III. Nor do we think the argument has much force, that this temporal power was wielded only over Catholic nations, and by consent of those nations, and that the Catholic Church does not claim the same power over Protestant nations and rulers. This argument is made great account of. It is said the Roman Hierarchy will not attempt now what it did in the middle ages. Therefore there need be no fear.

In the first place it is not true that the Popes exercised this power only by consent of the nations. That consent was not asked. It was claimed that subjects and rulers were alike under the power of the Pope in temporals as well as spirituals. The Pope never asked the people of England, nor the Barons of England, whether they consented to the deposition of King John. He would have considered it the height of presumption and wickedness in them to even think he ought to ask that consent.

In the second place the Pope claims, as we know, that all baptized persons, whether Catholics or Protestants, are his subjects.

If he had the power, he would be just as much in duty bound to preach a crusade for the suppression of the Protestants as for the suppression of the Albigenses. The Middle Ages are regarded by all these writers as the golden age, the age of faith; and if the Roman Church had the power it would bring them back again. The Catholics of Great Britain obtained certain privileges under the English government, under a pledge given by the high ecclesiastical authorities of that realm. They now break their engagement on the ground that no one was entitled to speak for the Pope. The Jesuits in Germany were plotting against the integrity of the German empire. Is there not reason for those nations to be on their guard against a power which for ages has held sway over civil governments, and wielded that power often in a tyrannical spirit?

We do not mean to justify the condition of things in England and Germany, in the matter of the relation of the Church and State there. We do not believe the Church ought to be under the power of the State. Bismarck may be wrong in his policy of exercising rule over the Church. But, if Romanism wishes to enjoy its rights with other Christian churches in England, Germany, and the United States, it must stop meddling in politics. "My kingdom is not of this world."

SEMI-CENTENNIAL REGISTER OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH, Lancaster, Pa. 1825-1875. Lancaster, Pa: Press of the Inquirer Printing and Publishing Company. 1875.

This Register, which has been before the Church for some time, contains a complete roll of the members of the Faculty, the members of the Board of Visitors and the Board of Trustees; a catalogue of all the Graduates; a catalogue of the Professors and Students now composing the Institution; an outline of its history, and a brief representation of its present theological status, and a necrological register.

As might be expected, the catalogue of the graduates is not in all cases correct. It contains the names of some who graduated in the College but studied theology privately, and of some who were in the Seminary but a short time and completed their theological studies privately. These latter are given as graduates because the rule in regard to the time of study in the Seminary has varied at different times, though it would be more proper to say *graduates and students*. These inaccuracies, so far as they come to the knowledge of those who have the matter in charge, will no doubt be corrected should another edition be issued. The Register contains 63 pages, and is issued in good style.

The introduction presents a brief history of the institution, but



which from its brevity could not state many facts in this history which would be interesting to the Church. It states in the main correctly, we think, what has been the central principle in the teaching of the Seminary. This teaching has a history. In one sense it has not been at all times just the same. To be living and moving it could not be the same. It has had to assert itself against different prevailing errors, and hence it has made certain phases of truth more prominent at one time than at another. At one time the *Church* Question was specially emphasized over against prevailing Puritanic unchurchliness. Then as against the pretensions of Rome it has held up the relation of Christ to the believer. Now it antagonized sharply while it was securing for itself an independent status; then again it revealed a milder attitude towards surrounding denominations. But all through it has held its teaching to the central principle of all true theology, the person of Christ the source of salvation for man, and the absolute revelation of God to man. We think the writer of this introduction has succeeded well in bringing so much information within so brief a compass. The Register will accomplish much good, and deserves a wide circulation in the Church.

**THE MORAL SYSTEM, WITH AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL INTRODUCTION.** Having special reference to Bishop Butler's "*Analogy*." Designed as a Text Book for Academies and Colleges. By E. H. Gillett, Professor in the University of the City of New York; author of "*Life and Times of John Huss*;" "*God in Human Thought*," etc. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Company. 1874.

This work, which is written in an earnest vein, is intended to supplant Butler's *Analogy*. Rather, perhaps we should say, it is designed to present the general subject with which that work is concerned, with the improvements which the author furnishes. He thinks Butler does not sufficiently bring out the argument for immortality derived from the consideration of the moral system. Butler's argument was merely negative, leaving the burden of proof to rest with his opponents. In fact, he assumed the doctrine of a future life. But inasmuch as that doctrine has been called in question by the unbelief of the present time, the author thinks the argument ought now to be pressed on its positive side, which he accordingly does in the body of this work. But we must say on this point that the doctrine of immortality, apart from revelation, does not amount to much. It was handled about as well by Plato as it is possible for the human mind to argue it. That argument is valuable in its place, as forming a presumption in favor of revelation. But we dare not overlook the fact that life and immortality



have been brought to light only in Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. The future life has no objective validity out of Christ. It is only a speculation. When moral philosophy attempts to say what it is, it is in the dark. So also the argument for the resurrection drawn from nature, which the author advances, has meaning only for those who accept the teachings of Christianity on this subject.

Again, he says, Butler assumes the existence of God. This, he thinks, requires new treatment, because modern scepticism calls in question Butler's data. But here also the same difficulty arises. Can we better the case by bringing forward *a posteriori* arguments to prove the being of God? We think not. The idea of God is a fact of consciousness, and the argument is just as strong when made to rest here, as to attempt to adduce it by reasoning from the moral system.

And just here lies our criticism of the author's work. There is certainly room for constructing a system of moral philosophy, without basing it directly on revelation. There is a distinction between Christian Ethics and Philosophical Ethics, just as there is a distinction between the philosophical treatment of psychology and Biblical psychology. But in this work the two are mixed together. Or rather, the author undertakes too much in his moral system. His chapters on the being and character of the Moral System, The Future Life, Probation, etc., carry him beyond the sphere of reason. It is only by revelation that we can know who God is, and the nature of the future life.

If the work is designed to promote belief in a true moral system without assuming the truth of Christianity, we doubt very much whether it will accomplish its purpose. The higher light here must aid the lower, not *vice versa*. Nature cannot illumine revelation, and revelation illumines nature. Let Christianity furnish us its light, let us accept it, and then we can still study nature in its own sphere, but we will be able to understand it. The natural finds its end in the supernatural, and the end here explains the beginning.

The work we are noticing contains many excellent things, but it is hardly complete enough to take its place among systems of moral philosophy. The topics treated are too few to cover the ground. There is no treatment of the nature of the moral law, nor of the principle of virtue. Even the chapter on social organization leaves out much that is necessary to complete that subject. The organization of society is looked at too much from an external point of view.

This work seems to us to move in the line of thought adopted in England in opposition to Deism. The German method has been very different. While they confine themselves to the sphere of consciousness and reason in constructing a philosophical system

of ethics, yet they do not think of keeping out the light of Christianity. The idea of the Trinity and the Incarnation they find to be in accord with reason. It is true that Kant sought to draw a line between the two, but in the rise of the great systems which came after him, the Scriptures and revelations are freely used, while at the same time they distinguish between the philosophical and the strictly theological. In studying philosophy and constructing philosophical systems, we ought to do so as Christians, and not as heathens.

The relation between morality and religion, or Christianity, is one upon which we cannot now enter. What is the sphere of philosophical ethics, and Christian ethics? Where and how do they connect? What is their relation to each other? These are questions, the treatment of which would require more space than is here left us, even had we the ability to give a satisfactory answer, which we do not claim.